





# LALIT KALĀ

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# LALIT KALĀ

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# LALIT KALĀ

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No. 5, April 1959

LALIT KALĀ AKADEMI

INDIA



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## CONTENTS

Editorial .. .. .	9
Golconda Cotton Paintings of the Early Seventeenth Century. John Irwin .. .. .	11
Western Chālukya Paintings at Badami. C. Sivaramamurti .. .. .	49
Rare Sculptures of the Early Choḷa Period. P. R. Srinivasan .. .. .	59
An Illustrated Ms of Mahāpurāṇa in the Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi. Moti Chandra .. .. .	68
A Rare Icon of Ugra Narasimha. T. S. Sundaram .. .. .	82
Reviews :	
Mewar Painting in the Seventeenth Century. B. G. .. .. .	83
Arts Asiatiques, Vol. IV. K. J. K. .. .. .	85
Graphic Art of Japan. P. H. H. .. .. .	87



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### COLOUR PLATES

Frontispiece	<i>Detail of Golconda Painted Cotton Wall Hanging</i>	..	..	..	..	..	8
Plate A	Golconda Painted Cotton Coverlet	..	..	..	..	..	31
Plate B	Indra Witnessing Music and Dance	..	..	..	..	..	51
Plate C	Kirtivarman Seated with His Queen	..	..	..	..	..	53
Plate D	Bharata Holding Court	..	..	..	..	..	71

### MONOCHROME PLATES AND LINE BLOCKS

#### *Article*

Golconda Cotton Paintings of the Early Seventeenth Century	..	Plates I to XX and Map on P. 13
Western Chālukya Paintings at Badami..	.. ..	Plates XXI to XXV
Rare Sculptures of the Early Choḷa Period	.. ..	Plates XXVI to XXVIII
An Illustrated Ms of Mahāpurāṇa in the Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi	.. ..	Plates XXIX to XXXI
A Rare Icon of Ugra Narasimha	.. ..	Plate XXXII









Detail from painted cotton wall hanging.  
Made for the Mughal market. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D.  
Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad.  
See Pl. XI, Fig. 15, and p. 42.  
Silk-screen reproduction on cloth. Courtesy of Calico Museum of Textiles.



## EDITORIAL

### THE PASSING AWAY OF TWO SCHOLARS

It is with regret that we note the passing away of two scholars in recent months, Dr. Alfred Salmony, the editor of *Artibus Asiae*, and Dr. J. V. S. Wilkinson. Their deaths leave lacunæ in their special fields which will be difficult to fill up.

A few years back Dr. Salmony visited India and we had the pleasure of meeting him and discussing with him problems of Indian art and archaeology. Though these subjects strictly did not fall within his range of scholarship, he was keenly interested in Indian art and with a connoisseur's eye could appreciate old works of Indian art. He had a scheme to publish monographs on Indian terracottas and bronzes. We do hope that the management of *Artibus Asiae* will take the same keen interest in Indian art as Dr. Salmony.

Dr. Wilkinson was a keen student of Mughal painting. In his quiet way he has contributed substantially to our knowledge of Mughal painting and various problems connected with it. The *Chester Beatty Collection of Indian Miniatures* compiled by Dr. Wilkinson together with Sir Thomas W. Arnold will stand for some time to come as a monument to scientific cataloguing. In his last days he was engaged in the study of Mughal and Persian paintings, which he loved.

### CHANGE OF POLICY

We are announcing a minor change in the publication policy of *Lalit Kalā*. The first issue of this journal was a joint issue comprising Nos. 1 and 2 and it was priced at Rs. 16 as we had printed 2000 copies. Thereafter it was decided that a lesser number of copies should be printed and accordingly the second issue, comprising Nos. 3 and 4, was limited to 750 copies, the subscription rate being Rs. 27.50 for the joint issue. But with the increasing interest all over the scholarly world in *Lalit Kalā*, the Akademi felt that henceforth 2000 copies should again be printed and that all issues should be single issues and that the policy of joint issues should be abandoned. The price of all future single issues has been fixed at Rs. 10 per issue. The joint issue Nos. 3-4, which is limited to 750 copies, will go out of print in a short time, and those who are keen on possessing a complete set of *Lalit Kalā* would do well to secure their copies direct from the Akademi to avoid the risk of an incomplete series. It will not be possible to reprint the joint issue Nos. 3-4.

All publications of the Akademi are sold on a non-profit basis, and accordingly the prices fixed in each case are the lowest possible. Originally it was decided that the journal should be issued biannually, but owing to various circumstances beyond our control it has been decided to issue the journal in serial order but without committing ourselves to any particular number of issues in a year. We hope, however, to publish two issues annually.



### *KISHANGARH PAINTING*

The fourth publication in the "Lalit Kalā Series of Indian Art", *Kishangarh Painting*, by Eric Dickinson and Karl Khandalavala, fulfils a long cherished desire of all those who knew that lovable personality, the late Eric Dickinson, the discoverer of the Kishangarh masterpieces. His name is closely linked with this discovery, but in his lifetime it was not possible for financial reasons to bring out an adequate volume on this subject so dear to his heart. Though he died without fulfilling his life's greatest ambition, the Akademi has now brought out a magnificent volume as a memorial to him. It contains sixteen colour plates, many of which are of exceptionally large size, six monochrome illustrations, seventeen pages of text and sixteen pages of notes descriptive of the paintings. The sixteen magnificent colour plates are from the twenty miniatures originally selected by Dickinson when he contemplated their publication in his lifetime. Parts of his original text have also been used wherever that was possible, but much new matter had to be incorporated due to fresh material coming to light from the Kishangarh archives and other sources. The format of the album is  $13\frac{3}{4}'' \times 18''$  and it is a handsome publication. The price is Rs. 28.75 nP in conformity with the Akademi's policy of selling its publication on a non-profit basis.



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

John Irwin

In museum collections in many parts of the world (in India and Japan, as well as in Europe and America) there are a number of early 17th century painted cotton hangings of Indian origin which have not hitherto been brought together for comparative study. The hangings clearly constitute a single group in style and provenance; and the superb quality of design, the glow and luminosity of their dye-colours, and the great technical skill reflected in their making, combine to give them a high place among artistic achievements of the period. Detailed examination of them is therefore long overdue.

Of the fifteen pieces assembled here, ten have previously been published in one context or another, but mostly by writers without specialised knowledge of Indian textile history.<sup>1</sup> Various opinions have been expressed—some suggesting Masulipatam as the provenance, others Mughal India—but so far without any serious attempt to establish proof. Here, for the first time, the group will be discussed as a whole and an effort made to place it in its exact historical context, while at the same time each piece will be catalogued individually.

At the outset, it must be emphasised that these hangings are of the kind properly described as painted, not printed. This distinction, however elementary, cannot be overstressed; for although both techniques stem from the science of dyeing, one of them is incomparably more skilled and offers much greater possibilities of design than the other. *Printing* implies the use of some sort of block for the impression either of dye-mordants or resist-materials, and by its nature such a technique limits effects of patterning to some sort of repeat or diaper. *Painting*, on the other hand, involves transference of design direct from paper to cloth by means of a stencil; and in this way the artisan is not limited to a repeat-pattern but can reproduce the outlines of a free-hand drawing and complete his final effects of colour with a brush.<sup>2</sup> In the hangings here reviewed, we find the latter technique carried to its furthest point, whereby the final effect obtained is so like a free-hand wall-painting as to make it easy to forget that they are not really paintings at all but each a complicated exercise in the chemistry of dye-fixing.

The skill and experience necessary for work of this kind can only have been acquired over a long period, as part of a slowly accumulated tradition. Moreover, the technical knowledge, having

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<sup>1</sup> Bibliographical references are included in the catalogue at the end.

<sup>2</sup> For an up-to-date investigation into traditional Indian cotton painting technique as practised on the Coromandel Coast, see the learned studies by Monsieur P. R. Schwartz, "French Documents on Indian Cotton Painting," *Journal of Indian Textile History*, Ahmedabad, Nos. 2 and 3, 1956 and 1957.



been empirically acquired, without proper understanding of scientific theory, was valid only for materials available in a particular locality, and for this reason alone cotton painters lacked the mobility of other artisans. Dye-stuffs, for instance, vary considerably from one region to another, and there is an intimate dependence on the chemical properties of a whole range of materials (including water) used as agents in dye-fixing. It is certainly true to say that a cotton painter who had learned his art in the hinterland of Masulipatam, for instance, would have been unable to achieve the same results with materials available in Rajasthan or even a hundred miles to the south. In some cases it might be questioned whether he could achieve the same results anywhere outside his own village, which may have owed its reputation as a dyeing centre to chance properties in the local water supply.

All this simplifies the classification of traditional Indian cotton painting, especially when we are dealing with the *finest* class of work, the production of which was limited in the 17th century to only a very few localities : Sironj in Rajasthan ; Burhanpur in Khandesh ; Petaboli and Palakollu on the Golconda seaboard, and certain towns in the hinterland of St. Thome (modern Madras).

Fortunately, a sufficient number of early cotton paintings of known origin survive to enable us to identify the main regional characteristics. For Western India, we have fragments found in Egyptian burial grounds ;<sup>1</sup> and in addition an important group of hangings bearing a 17th century Gujarati inscription.<sup>2</sup> Recently, the Victoria and Albert Museum has acquired another Western Indian piece, in this case bearing the Royal Stuart coat-of-arms (probably Charles II, 1660-1685). In both drawing and colour, these Western Indian pieces comprise a distinct group which cannot be confused with contemporary hangings from the South. The Madras style is represented by many surviving Brahmanical temple-cloths of the 18th and 19th century, as well as by palampores of this and an earlier period made for the European market. The hangings here under review are quite different to either of these groups, and we are therefore left with Petaboli and Palakollu on the Golconda seaboard as the remaining possible sources to be investigated.

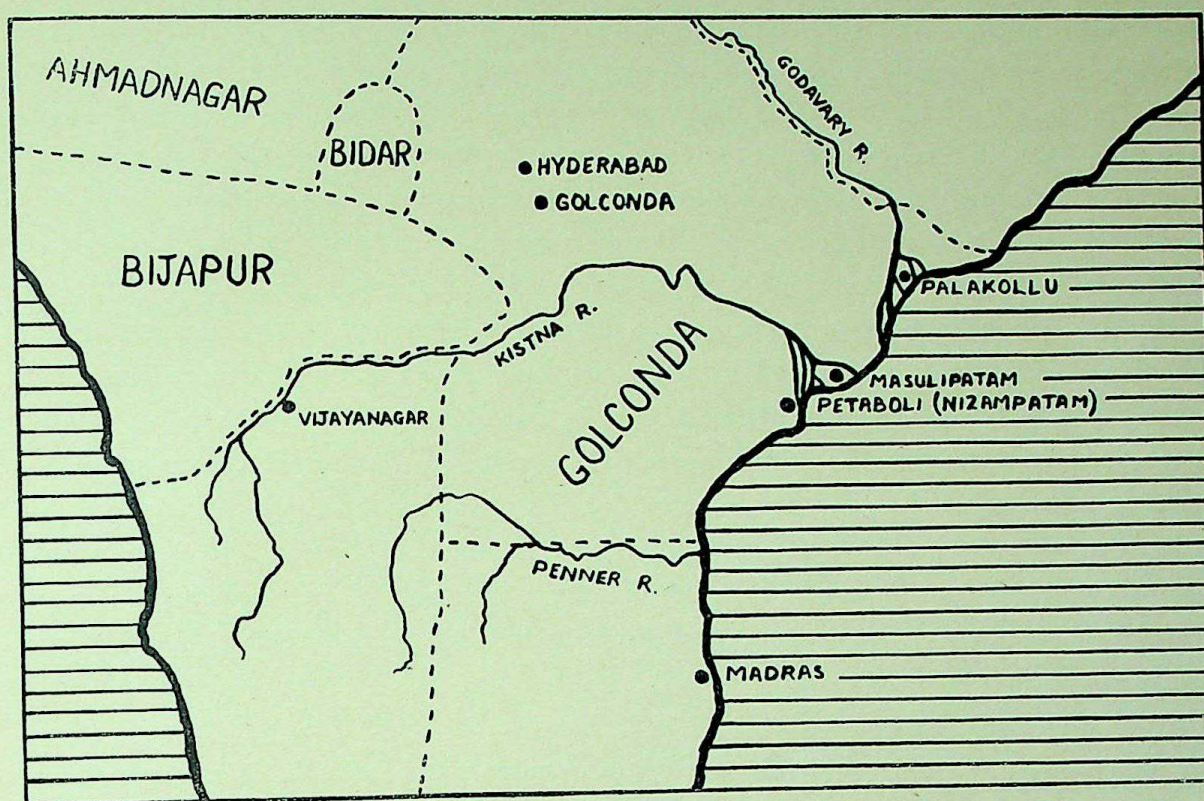
To establish proof that the hangings came from these centres in Golconda, at least three conditions must be met. First, we must be satisfied that commercial conditions prevailing in that part of India were consistent with the manufacture of such hangings. Secondly, a connection must be sought between the technical features of this particular group of hangings and the dye materials locally available. Thirdly, we must consider the extent to which style and subject-matter are consistent with traditions in this part of India.

<sup>1</sup> R. Pfister, *Les Toiles Imprimées de Fostat et l'Hindoustan*, Paris 1938.

<sup>2</sup> J. Irwin, "The Commercial Embroidery of Gujarat in the 17th Century," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Calcutta, Vol. 17, 1949 (issued 1953).



# GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY



The Deccan Sultanates. Circa 1600 A.D.

## COMMERCIAL BACKGROUND

The main source of evidence for commercial conditions in Golconda territory in the early 17th century is Dutch and English trade records, the former having established their first settlement there in 1605, and the latter in 1611.

During the first half of the century, neither of the two trading companies was primarily interested in a European market for Indian goods.<sup>1</sup> Their main concern was with the spice trade of the Malayan Archipelago, for which Indian textiles constituted the staple article of barter. It was a three-cornered trade, in which ships first sailed from Europe to India with bullion; in India they exchanged the bullion for cotton piece-goods, and then took the piece-goods to the spice islands where they were bartered for spices for the return journey to Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian piece-goods required for this trade were mostly cotton, in the proportion of one-third plain woven cloth to two-thirds painted.<sup>3</sup> At this period, the painted cotton

<sup>1</sup> It was not until 1649 that any English ship sailed direct to Europe from the Coromandel Coast.

<sup>2</sup> I have discussed this subject more fully in my series of articles, "Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century," published in the first three issues of the *Journal of Indian Textile History*, Ahmedabad 1955, 1956 and 1957.

<sup>3</sup> *English Factories in India 1634-36*, ed. by W. Foster, Oxford 1911, p. 161.



piece-goods which were required for the spice trade were bought mostly at Pulicat and St. Thome in modern Madras state, whereas Golconda seaboard towns supplied chiefly plain woven cloth. On the other hand, both Dutch and English factors were quick to recognise that the comparatively small quantities of painted cotton piece-goods which Golconda did produce were of very superior quality, especially on account of the red dye-colour which distinguished them from painted cotton piece-goods made elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> They were famed and coveted for their special quality in many parts of Asia under the name of 'Masulipatam chintz',<sup>2</sup> but in fact this was a misnomer. Masulipatam was not at this period a producing centre for such goods, but simply the port or emporium where goods made in the hinterland could be bought or contracted (Bowrey aptly called it "the great bazar of these parts for above 100 miles in circuit"<sup>3</sup>). The actual centres of cotton painting were, as we shall come to show, Petaboli (also known as Nizampatam) about 40 miles southwest of Masulipatam, and Palakollu about 80 miles to the north (see Map, p. 13). Painted cotton piece-goods bought at either of these places were at least 30 per cent cheaper than when bought in Masulipatam,<sup>4</sup> and accordingly both the Dutch and English kept factors permanently stationed there.

These arrangements worked smoothly at first, but not for long. On 31st January, 1636, the English factors stationed at Bantam (Java), under whose administrative responsibility trading operations on the Coromandel Coast were conducted, wrote a letter to London which contains one sentence of utmost importance for the light it throws on the Golconda cotton-painting industry. The factors complained that they were no longer receiving supplies of Golconda painted cotton piece-goods for the spice markets, "... the which paintings in former times

<sup>1</sup> "Pettipolee [Petaboli] must likewise be continued, chiefly for reds, because no other place affords the like colour; and there we shall also be fitted with the finer sorts of cloth that is required for the southwards [i.e. Malay Archipelago] factories . . ." Letter from English factors at Masulipatam dated 25th October, 1634, *English Factories in India 1634-36*, 1911, p. 45. A similar statement is made in "Notes on Choromandel Trade," prepared by the Dutch factors in 1607, India Office Archives, Hague Transcripts, I, xxvii.

<sup>2</sup> The cotton paintings of St. Thomé (modern Madras) were sometimes mentioned in the same breath as those of 'Masulipatam'. In this connection, however, it is worth drawing attention to a small but significant mistranslation of Thévenot's *Travels* in the 1686 English edition which has been uncritically copied in the 1951 Indian edition (edited by S. N. Sen). Thévenot is translated as saying in his description of Masulipatam (Part III, Ch. IX) that "there is great trading there in Chites, because besides those that are made there, a great many are brought from St. Thomé, which are much finer, and of better colours than those of other parts of India." However, the use of a semi-colon in the original French makes it clear that he meant that the Masulipatam chintz, not St. Thomé chintz, was "much finer and of better colours than those of other parts of India."

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Bowrey, *The Countries Round the Bay of Bengal*, London 1903, p. 106. I am aware, of course, that cotton paintings were made at Masulipatam throughout the 19th century, but I don't know of any evidence to show that such an industry flourished in Masulipatam itself before the late 18th century. Moreover, I recognise little stylistic relation between 17th century Petaboli work and later Masulipatam chintz. I suspect that Persian immigrant craftsmen played a leading role in the later industry.

<sup>4</sup> "And it is far more beneficial to the Company to have their commodities bought there at the best hand than to contract for the same here in Masulipatam, after it has paid at least 30 % customs on the way, besides profit that the seller will justly expect to put into his own purse." Letter from Masulipatam factors dated 25th October, 1634, India Office Archives, Official Correspondence no. 1536.



# GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

were procured near Masulipatam ; which (as it seems) was before the Great Magore and Persian took so great affection unto fine paintings ; but after that they delighted therein, the said places adjacent Masulipatam were wholly taken up for their use, with command from the King of Golconda (whose country it is) that the painters should work only for them. . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

At this point, it is of some importance to decide what was meant by the phrase “in former times”. We have already explained that the English opened their first settlement at Masulipatam in 1611, and that for some years at least they were buying painted cotton piece-goods for the spice islands. Yet, in 1636, it was possible to apply to this period the phrase “in former times”. Is it not plausible that the phrase applied to the middle period between their arrival (in 1611) and the date of writing (January, 1636) ? If this is accepted as a hypothesis, it follows that the Mughals and Persians first began to show “great affection unto fine paintings” in the early 1620s. This, as we shall see, is consistent with other evidence arising from a careful scrutiny of the hangings themselves, indicating that they were all executed within the three decades between 1620 and 1650.

The reason why the ‘King of Golconda’ intervened was not only because of the role of his court as consumer (although this undoubtedly played some part),<sup>2</sup> but because he and his nobles had stakes in sea-commerce with Persia. Cotton paintings played an important part in this commerce, especially in the form of floor-spreads, bedspreads and coat-linings.<sup>3</sup> In exchange, Golconda received mainly horses, a regular supply of which was necessary for state security on account of the importance of cavalry in contemporary military tactics.<sup>4</sup> Ships under Golconda charter left the Persian Gulf laden with horses in April each year and arrived at Masulipatam in May or June. There they waited six months while goods were specially commissioned (silk and muslin goods as well as cotton paintings, of course), and returned to Persia at the end of the same year.<sup>5</sup> The well-known French traveller

<sup>1</sup> India Office Archives, Official Correspondence no. 1552. The letter is summarised in *English Factories in India, 1634-36*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Dutch records of 1607 reveal that Petaboli supplied painted cloth “used by the King of Golconda and the King of Persia for their soldiers”. “*Notes on Choromandel Trade*,” India Office Archives, Hague Transcripts, Vol. I, p. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> “Cheetes or Pinthatoes are here [in Persia] much used in the linings of coats and in the making of beds and quilts . . .” Letter dated April, 1618, from Barker in Persia to Sir Thomas Roe, India Office Archives, Official Correspondence no. 792. “Cheetes or pinthatoes in request [in Persia], much used for beds . . .” Letter from Pettus dated September, 1618, *ibid.*, no. 699. In 1629, Thomas Herbert described how, in Shiraz, he saw “fine coloured Pintado table-cloths, 40 ells long at least” spread over carpets in rich dwellings. *Travels*, p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> It was control of the horse-trade between Persia and Goa which, more than any other single factor, gave the Portuguese their bargaining power with the Deccani rulers. In this connection, see P. M. Joshi, “Relations between the Adilshahi Kingdom of Bijapur and the Portuguese at Goa,” published in *A Volume of Indian Studies Presented to Sir E. Denison Ross*, edited by S. M. Katre and P. K. Gode, Bombay 1939, pp. 162-163.

<sup>5</sup> *English Factories in India 1642-45*, ed. by W. Foster, Oxford 1913, pp. 87-88. On several occasions the English factories both in India and in Persia wrote to the London Directors to advise them of the lucrative possibilities of competing for a share in this trade. “. . . In my opinion, if there were a stock of £20,000 at Masulipatam, to be invested in such commodities as that country doth afford, bought at the best hand when the time of the year affords, and brought hither, it would yield you more certain gain and advantage than



Tavernier first reached India in 1652 in a ship plying this trade which actually belonged to the 'King of Golconda'; and if we wonder why the Golconda authorities should have found it necessary to monopolise the services of cotton painters, we have Tavernier's evidence that the total production of fine cotton paintings was so small that "when one makes requisition of all the workers who manufacture these cotton cloths it is with difficulty that he can obtain as much as three bales."<sup>2</sup>

In the Mughal dominions, Golconda cotton paintings were also much in demand, not only as dress material (especially *jāmas* and girdles) but also as wall-hangings commonly used for decorating tents. Bernier, describing one of the Emperor Aurangzeb's encampments in 1665, said that the principal tent (*'ām-khas*) was lined inside "with beautiful hand-painted chintz, manufactured for the purpose at Masulipatam", and that the Emperor's private apartment was also hung with "Masulipatam chintz, painted over with flowers of a hundred different kinds."<sup>3</sup> Europeans were also buyers of the cotton paintings, independently of their needs for the spice trade. Although neither the Dutch nor English company had started shipping such goods to Europe on a commercial scale, there is plenty of evidence to show that individually the factors frequently commissioned such goods for their own purposes, which included shipping them home as articles of private trade.<sup>4</sup> Occasional purchases were also made

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any commodity you can send from England here; I proportion at least cent per cent profit. The return is short and without danger, for the stock adventured from Masulipatam in June will be here in September and may be returned in March next, when the ships go thither to load up." Letter from Gombroon factors to London, *English Factories in India 1630-33*, ed. by W. Foster, Oxford 1910, p. 296. Again, in 1634: "Consider that £20,000 (in gold, either coin or bullion) would be a suitable yearly supply for this purpose; and it should reach Masulipatam by May or June. They could invest triple that sum, 'for we are to deal only in fine goods, such as in 4 or 5 months time may be procured to an extraordinary amount, witness the abundance of rich bales that are yearly bought by Moores, etc., about Golconda and transported on your ships for Gombroon . . .'. Quoted from *English Factories in India 1634-36*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>1</sup> "I left Gombroon for Masulipatam on 11th May, 1652, having embarked on a large vessel belonging to the King of Golconda, which every year goes to Persia laden with muslins and chites or coloured calicoes (i.e., cotton paintings), the flowered decoration of which is all done by hand—which makes them more beautiful and more expensive than when printed." He adds that the vessel was carrying fifty-five horses and about 100 merchants engaged in Indo-Persian trade. The navigation of such vessels run by the "Kings or Princes of India", he says, was normally in the hands of Dutch seamen lent by the Dutch company for the purpose. In this case the crew consisted of six Dutchmen and about 100 "sailors of the country". Tavernier, *Travels*, trans. by V. Ball, London 1889, Vol. I, pp. 255-56.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ch. IX.

<sup>3</sup> Bernier, *Travels*, translated by A. Constable, London 1891, pp. 361-62. See also Pyrard de Laval's description, written in 1610, of "Masulipatam hangings" at the court of the 'King of Maldives'. *Discourse de Voyage*, Paris 1611, pp. 58-60.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, in 1632, Woodson at Masulipatam writes to his colleague Colley at Petaboli for "a chitte to make a quilt" (*English Factories in India 1630-33*, ed. by W. Foster, p. 229). In the same year Colley received a request from another Masulipatam colleague to exchange a writing cabinet for a 'chint' from Petaboli (*Calendar of State Papers, East Indies, 1630-34*, p. 336). An indication of the comparative lack of profit in the export of chintz to Europe at this period is reflected in the fact that "quilts of painted calico" were among articles officially permitted to be brought home as private trade. Any employee of the English company could bring home on each voyage a chest-full not exceeding 4 ft × 1½ ft × 1½ ft, and senior employees could bring double that quantity (Proclamation of Charles I, Public Records Office, London, S. P. 45, Vol. 10, No. 150).



officially for use as presents or bribes in other parts of Asia, "Masulipatam chintz" being almost everywhere coveted and esteemed as a valuable gift.<sup>1</sup>

In England, painted cotton hangings were beginning to become fashionable by 1630, and in that year factors bringing them home as articles of private trade could expect £30 for enough pieces to decorate one room.<sup>2</sup> In the 1641 inventory of Tart Hall — fashionable home of the Countess of Arundel — we find listed "a suite of Hangings Consisting of Four Pieces of Indian Pantadoes,<sup>3</sup> and Curtaynes of the same suite with a Valence thereto, and four little Indian Carpets . . ."<sup>4</sup> In 1663 Pepys recorded having bought his wife "a chint, that is, a painted East India callicoe for to line her new study"; and two years later Evelyn saw in Lady Maudant's house at Ashtead ". . . a room hung with Pintado, full of figures great and small, prettily representing sundry trades and occupations of the Indians, with their habits." Almost certainly, the last of these was a Golconda hanging of the type under examination here.

Summing up the commercial evidence, we find that in the first half of the 17th century Golconda state was famous throughout Asia for the exceptional quality of its cotton-paintings made in the hinterland of Masulipatam (in the regions of Petaboli and Palakollu). In scale; however, the industry was a small one and unable to meet growing demand — so much so that when in the 1620s the Persian and Mughal demand increased, there was an attempt on behalf of the Golconda authorities to monopolise the services of cotton painters in the interests of Indo-Persian trade and to the exclusion of European interests. The latter were concerned mainly with the export of cotton-paintings in the form of piece-goods to the Malayan Archipelago, where they were bartered for spices; but from 1630 onwards, individual Dutch and English factors often commissioned them in the form of hangings, curtains and coverlets to take to Europe as articles of private trade.

### TECHNICAL EVIDENCE

One of the most distinctive features of the hangings under review is the glowing quality of the reds used in them. This distinction can only have been achieved as the result of some special advantage in materials locally available, which we shall now have to consider.

- <sup>1</sup> For instance, in 1633, the English factors at Surat complained to the London Directors that they were in need of presents "for want whereof the Company are forced to buy them at dear rates, viz., gold sashes of Ahmedabad, fine chinte of Masulipatam" (*Calendar of State Papers, East Indies, 1630-34*, p. 379). In the same year, factors in Persia appealed for "fine chintz of Masulipatam" for use as presents (*English Factories in India 1630-33*, p. 289).
- <sup>2</sup> India Office Archives, Court Minutes of 1st July, 1631, Vol. XII, p. 302. £30 was paid for a set of "pintado hangings . . . for fitting a gallery or room".
- <sup>3</sup> From Portuguese *pintado*, lit. 'painted', applied to cotton paintings. In the early 17th century, this word was interchangeable with 'chintz', 'chitte' or 'chint', said to derive from the Sanskrit root *chit*, lit. 'variegated'. Not until the 18th century was 'chintz' applied to *printed* cottons.
- <sup>4</sup> *Burlington Magazine*, London, Vol. 20, 1911-12, p. 235. See also p. 342 where another room is described as being "hanged with Indian hangings lyned with Callicoe". "Pantado Carpets" were not of course carpets in the modern sense of floor-coverings, but table-covers. The word 'carpet' was not in general use in the sense of a floor-covering until the 18th century.



There is ample literary evidence to show that in the early 17th century it was precisely this feature which gave Golconda cotton paintings their special fame. William Methwold, for instance, who was senior factor at Masulipatam between 1618 and 1622, wrote : "The paintings of this coast of Choromandel are famous throughout India, and are indeed the most exquisite that are seen, the best wrought all with the pencil, and with such durable colours that, notwithstanding they be often washed, the colours fade not whilst the cloth lasteth; and this hapneth principally by a plant which groweth only in this country (Golconda), called by them *chay*, which dyeth or stayneth a perfect red, with them in an great account as scarlet with us, and is the King's particular commodity."<sup>1</sup> A decade later, when there was some question of the English company giving up its factory at Petaboli, the factors on the spot insisted that it must be continued at all costs "... chiefly for reds, because no other place affords the like colour."<sup>2</sup> The Dutch records of 1607 were even more explicit : "The red paint (i.e. dye), with which the clothes at that place (Petaboli) are coloured, could only be found on a little island in the neighbourhood. . . ."<sup>3</sup> Yet another Dutch document, written about 1610, noting that the dye-quality of *chay* varies considerably according to site where it is grown, adds that the best of all came from "the island called *Tambreve*, opposite *Nizampatam* (Petaboli)."<sup>4</sup> The deltaic islands at the mouth of the Krishna river consist of little more than shifting sand, which perhaps explains why the island of *Tambreve* is not to be found on modern maps. At the end of the 17th century, the English traveller Alexander Hamilton wrote that the *chay* so famous to this area was grown on an island called *Diu*, and went on to describe it as "a shrub growing in grounds that are overflown with spring-tides. It stains their calicoes in the most beautiful and lively colours in the world. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

*Chay* (Telegu, *tsheri-vello* ; Tamil, *saya-ver* ; English, 'chay' or 'East India madder') is known to botanists as *Oldenlandia umbellata*, Linn., the source of dye being its root. It was widely cultivated along the whole coast of southeast India, and the fact that "Northern (i.e. Golconda) chay" was held to give much better dye results than "Southern (i.e. Madras) chay" was often attributed to the fact that at the mouth of the Krishna delta it grew in its *wild* state,<sup>6</sup> whereas in the south it usually had to be cultivated.

<sup>1</sup> *Relations of Golconda*, ed. by W. H. Moreland, London 1930, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Masulipatam factors dated 25.10.1634. *English Factories in India 1634-36*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>3</sup> "Notes on Choromandel Trade", p. xxvii.

<sup>4</sup> *Relations of Golconda*, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Hamilton, *New Account of the East Indies*, Edinburgh 1727, Vol I, p. 370.

<sup>6</sup> When the English company, at the end of the 17th century, developed cotton painting for the European market on a large scale at Fort St. George (Madras), special efforts were made to secure "Northern chay", and there were constant wranglings between the company and cotton painters working for them about the mixing of cheap "Southern chay" with the "Northern". In February, 1700, the Governor of Fort St. George reported : "I have with all diligence encouraged the painting trade . . . I think we far outdo Masulipatam and hope by the next ship to send you a thousand pieces such as never were seen in the world, if I can but keep these cursed fellows from mixing the Southern chay with the Northern, the latter being best and costs much more." British Museum, Add. Ms. 22842, f. 31.



Like most empirical theories of the pre-literate craftsman, this one contained its core of truth to which only a much later generation could give scientific explanation. We must note in this connection Alexander Hamilton's significant observation that the sites where the famous Golconda chay grew were "*overflowed with spring tides*". Another observer, writing in the 18th century, remarked on the presence of a high proportion of "*broken or rotten shells*" in the sandy soil, and at once suspected some connection between this and the fact that the red-producing dye-root used in contemporary Europe (called *gallium album vulgare*) was known to give best results when grown on "old walls or rubbish".<sup>1</sup> With the same logic, the English gardener is advised by traditional lore to grow certain plants (especially stone-fruits) on "old mortar rubble from the builder's scrap-heap". The explanation is of course in the high calcium-content of such materials, and the modern dye-chemist will be the first to confirm the unique properties of calcium as an agent in fixing madder-type dyes to cloth fibre.<sup>2</sup>

*Chay* in its cultivated form (as grown on the Madras coast, for instance) did not have the advantage of soil-beds "overflowed with spring tides", but according to all accounts was grown with dung under ordinary conditions of tillage. Thus the soil would have lacked the same high concentration of "broken or rotten shells" and hence of calcium. This is fully adequate to explain the distinguishing beauty of the reds in Golconda cotton paintings — and, *pari passu*, in those hangings assembled here for study.

### SUBJECT-MATTER

In the ordinary way, it would seem pointless or pedantic to discuss subject-matter and style under separate headings. In this case, however, exception is justified, for at the outset it has to be recognised that the artisans who executed these hangings were not the true inventors of the subject-matter depicted, and only in a limited sense were they the authors of the style. From the same point of view, it could be alleged that they were really copyists, since they worked from musters supplied to them by the commissioning agents, and more often than not these musters were in a style totally foreign to their own local tradition. To grasp what happened we must first understand something about the circumstances of manufacture.

From scattered literary sources, we can piece together a fairly clear picture of the kind of people who made the hangings and the conditions in which they worked. (In some respects they were similar to conditions prevailing among surviving groups of cotton painters

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Philibert Rousselot de Surgy, *Mémoires Géographiques, Physiques et Historiques*, Paris 1768; quoted from P. R. Schwartz (see following footnote).

<sup>2</sup> For guidance on these technical issues, I am indebted to Monsieur P. R. Schwartz and his learned articles, "French Documents on Indian Cotton Painting," contributed to the second and third issues of the *Journal of Indian Textile History*, Ahmedabad 1956 and 1957.



in India to-day.<sup>1</sup>) They were caste Hindus working on a joint-family basis often in conditions of extreme poverty and indebtedness, without access to the amenities enjoyed by artists employed directly under court patronage. Between one joint-family and another, there was considerable division of labour, and there is no reason to suppose that any hanging was necessarily executed by the same hands from start to finish. Havart, describing conditions among cotton painters at Palakollu in the 1680s, said that there were "four kinds of painters ('vierderley zoort van schilders'), who each have according to their family a special name. Between these is divided the demand, and they put out the work again to those of lower rank who do the work ('en zy besteden het weder aan hare mindere die't werk doen')."<sup>2</sup> Here he is describing a procedure common even today in the Indian handicraft industry, whereby one family, having undertaken to supply a complete article (in this case a painted cotton hanging), sub-contracts for certain specialised operations in the manufacture. For instance, one family might have done the initial drawing, another the waxing, a third the indigo-dyeing, and so on. In the case of the hangings under review, it is improbable in my view that any of them would have been executed from beginning to end by the same joint-family.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, as we shall see and discuss in further detail later, it is clear that the same draughtsmen were at work again and again in different pieces.

The living conditions of the cotton painters were primitive, and the actual scene of operations was usually the bank or dried-up bed of a river (dyeing operations could be carried on only in the 'dry' season, all work ceasing with the monsoons). Three months was usually the minimum period between the commissioning of a hanging and its delivery as a finished article. One witness described the work going on "very slowly, like snails which creep on and appear not to advance. Yes, he who would wish to depict Patience would need no other object than such a painter of Palicol [Palakollu]."<sup>4</sup> Another witness described the actual painting being done "by little children as well as elder grown, they stretching the piece on the ground, and sitting upon them, run them over with a dexterity and exactness peculiar to themselves."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am thinking in particular of the Vaghri Harijan families, for instance, who work in the bustee areas of Ahmedabad producing temple-cloths by a combination of painting and printing techniques.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Havart, *Op-en Ondergang van Cormandel*, Amsterdam 1693, Vol. III, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> It is perhaps relevant in this connection to quote evidence pointing to a similar organisation among cotton painters in the Madras region. In the 1670s (a decade earlier than Havart), the Abbé Caré had written of that area: "Hindus are also distinguished among themselves according to their business and employment . . . The Palis are painters, who do the designing and tracing of the first lines in the manufacture of printed (painted) calicoes and stuffs." Fawcett, editor of the Hakluyt Society translation, identifies the 'Palis' with the Pallis, who are now mostly agriculturists. He concludes that a section may have been cotton painters in the 17th century, but quotes a Madras document of 1654, which speaks of a dispute between "the Painters and a Pallee." He also refers to a list of Madras castes prepared in 1686 which distinguishes a 'Painter' caste and a 'Pally' caste. On the other hand, he points out that in modern times the Pallis have assumed the title of Mudaliyar, which was also used by chief 'painters' in 1680. Abbé Caré, *Travels*, ed. by Fawcett, London 1947, p. 595. The important point arising from all this is that the *designers* of Madras-area cotton paintings, or those who actually executed the outline-drawing, were distinct from those who did the actual dyeing.

<sup>4</sup> Havart, *Op-en Ondergang van Cormandel*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> John Fryer, *A New Account of the East Indies and Persia*, London 1909, Vol. I, p. 90.



The dependence of cotton painters upon musters is frequently stressed in Dutch and English records. Havart's somewhat brash and arrogant comments in this connection are perhaps a fair reflection of the attitude of European traders at the time: "... Chintzes are painted here [Palakollu] according to musters which are given to the painters which they then imitate completely and extremely well, for their national character is so stupid that they cannot imagine anything by themselves but can only imitate something so that it has a complete likeness."<sup>1</sup> In fact, Havart is overstating the case. As we shall see later when we come to examine the hangings in detail, there is no evidence that musters were ever copied *exactly*. On the contrary, more often than not the cotton painter freely adapted the material "after his own manner" (a phrase recurring in English records in this connection), and it was precisely the exotic nuance given to familiar themes which contributed largely to the popularity of such hangings in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Another aspect of social conditions which we shall find relevant when we begin to consider sources of style is the actual manner in which such hangings were commissioned for export markets. For this information, we are again primarily dependent on European records.

Foreign merchants visiting the Coromandel Coast in the early 17th century did not normally buy their goods direct from producers, language difficulties alone being sufficient to make this difficult. Instead, they employed brokers, who in Golconda were invariably described as "Committees" — in other words, members of the Telegu-speaking Komati caste. The Komatis received musters from the foreign merchants, together with an advance (usually money, but sometimes in the form of food or materials). The majority of the producers were so poor that without an advance no work could be undertaken, and it was in this way that merchants were able to exert control over them. If producers were scattered, the broker would then sub-contract to others of the same caste (described as "inferior Committees").

Although there is no positive indication of the way in which painted cotton hangings were ordered, there is no reason to suppose that procedure differed from that of other textile goods. Besides Europeans, there were many Persian merchants resident at such places as Petaboli,<sup>3</sup> and it is reasonable to suppose that they also depended on members of the Komati caste for actual negotiations with producers. As we shall see, the point is important because it means that the same brokers who ordered cotton paintings for the Europeans would also have worked for the Persians.

Turning now to the pictorial subject-matter of the hangings under review, we have no

<sup>1</sup> Havart, *Op-en Ondergang van Cormandel*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>2</sup> I have dealt with this aspect in some detail in my paper, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style' in English Decorative Art," *Burlington Magazine*, London, Vol. 97, April 1955.

<sup>3</sup> In 1610 a Dutch factor noted that there were so many Persians resident at Petaboli that a substantial sale for Chinese porcelain existed entirely on their account. *Relations of Golconda*, p. 55.



difficulty in identifying three distinct groups, corresponding to the tastes of the markets for which they were intended: (1) Indo-Persian (Pls. A, II, III, XII-XV); (2) European (Pls. IV, V and X), and (3) Hindu (Pl. I). The hanging reproduced in sections at Pls. VI to IX is so mixed in subject-matter that it might have been intended to satisfy any taste for the 'exotic'.

Among the 'Indo-Persian' hangings, one is tempted to look for a further sub-division between those intended for a Persian market and those designed to appeal to Persianised tastes in India; but in fact Persian and Indian elements are so mixed as to make any finer distinction rather arbitrary, and in fact cotton paintings intended for these two markets were probably to some extent interchangeable.

Scenes of drinking and debauchery, characteristic of the 'Indo-Persian' group (especially Pls. A, and XII to XV) are a fair reflection of tastes and habits both at the contemporary Safavid court at Isfahan<sup>1</sup> and at the Islamic courts of the Deccan. There is abundant evidence to show that the rulers of Golconda, for instance, modelled their behaviour on the Safavid way of life. Muhammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh of Golconda (1580-1611), who was said to have had four wives and a thousand concubines,<sup>2</sup> married one of his daughters to Shāh 'Abbās the Great, and between 1603 and 1609 kept an embassy of a hundred Persians at his capital.<sup>3</sup> Drinking habits at court are reflected in a letter written by the English factors at Masulipatam in 1634 to the effect that Canary wine was one of their most profitable imports, "of better esteem amongst most of the nobility at court than to give five times its value in anything else."<sup>4</sup>

Individual figures and groups of figures depicted in some of the 'Indo-Persian' pieces are clearly lifted from Persian miniature paintings of the so-called Rizā-yi-'Abbāsī school. Of special significance in this connection are the two pieces at Pls. XII and XV, Fig. 19, where, as the catalogue notes explain, certain figures are duplicated in the two hangings, indicating that they were copied from a common source (yet adapted to quite different designs). On account of certain marked changes of fashion at the Safavid court, these figures provide important clues for dating. For example, one feature which recurs in all of them is the large, rounded, somewhat cumbersome type of late Safavid turban, worn with end-pieces projecting in fan-like form (typically represented by the central figures at Pl. IV). This form

<sup>1</sup> Describing wall-decorations the Ali Qapi, at Isfahan, seen in 1628, Pietro della Valle wrote: "As they do not paint historical or mythological subjects as we do, all these figures are only men and women, either alone or in company, in *modo lascivio*." *Travels*, London 1665. Herbert also noted in the house of an Armenian Prince at Julfa "... such beastly pictures, such ugly postures, as are indeed not fit to be remembered." *Travels*, ed. by W. Foster, London 1928.

<sup>2</sup> *Relations of Golconda*, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> "The History of Mahomed Koolly Shah," trans. from an anonymous Persian ms. by J. Briggs and included in *History of the Rise of Mahomedan Power in India*, Vol. III, Calcutta 1910, pp. 475-6.; and Sha Rocco, *A Guide to Golconda Fort and Tombs*, Hyderabad, n. d., p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *English Factories in India 1634-36*, pp. 46-47.



of turban had its own clear development in Persian fashions of the early 17th century. In the first two decades, it was worn either without any end-piece showing at all, or with the end-piece visible but *unstiffened*. In the 1620s it is first seen in Persian paintings with the end-piece *slightly stiffened*,<sup>1</sup> such as we see it depicted in the hanging at Pl. I. During the following decade it became an increasingly conspicuous feature until, by the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II (1642-1667), it was an almost universal feature in its *stiffly* projecting form.<sup>2</sup> Although costume details such as this can be misleading as evidence when applied dogmatically, they are nonetheless a useful guide, and in this case we shall see that the conclusions they suggest are amply confirmed on other grounds.

Besides details lifted from Persian painting, we shall notice that both Deccani and Mughal schools of miniature painting have also left their mark in the designs of the 'Indo-Persian' group — in particular, the court dancing-scene with princely audience depicted at the bottom-centre of Pl. XIV; and the 'siesta' scene in the centre of the same piece. This aspect will be discussed in more detail later.

The 'European' group provides us with independent and even more specific evidence for dating. Among them are two hangings (Pls. IV and V) which, in my opinion, owe their form to a well-known type of Jesuit engraving depicting Virgin and Child in a centre panel, with saints looking up to her in adoration from a lower panel, the whole being surrounded with a border of smaller panels illustrating the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary. A Japanese copy of this type of composition is reproduced at Pl. XIX. There, the saints depicted are Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier. Since they were not elevated to sainthood until 1622, we can safely infer that the prototype engraving was in circulation *after that year*.<sup>3</sup>

Further clues are provided by details of European costume — and in particular, the costume worn by the horseman in the equestrian portrait at Pl. XVII which, for reasons explained in detail in the catalogue notes, cannot have been copied in India before 1630 at the earliest.

The specifically Mughal elements in these hangings correspond closely with fashions of the Shāh Jahān period (1628-1666). This applies in particular to costume details such as turbans (frequently worn with plume) and girdles, for which many parallels will be found in the Windsor Castle *Shāh-Jahān-nāma*.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the Leningrad *Shāh-nāma* catalogued "c. 1625" by Giusalian and Diakonov, *Iranskiye Miniaturi v Rukopisiakh Shah-Name Leningradskikh Sobraniy*, Moscow-Leningrad 1935, Pl. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph M. Upton, in his *Notes on Persian Costume of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Metropolitan Museum Studies, Vol. II, Pt. 2, New York 1930, p. 216) identified this form specifically with the reign of Shāh 'Abbās II. In addition to the sources cited by him, I would like to add the Leningrad *Shāh-nāma* dated 1642-51 (Giusalian and Diakonov, *Iranskiye Miniaturi v Rukopisiakh Shah-Name Leningradskikh Sobraniy*, Pls. 37 and 43).

<sup>3</sup> For a summary of evidence relating to the dating of the Japanese copy, see J. E. McCall, "Early Jesuit Art in the Far East," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. X, No. 4, 1947, pp. 284-292. The author, after quoting opinions of Jesuit historians supporting a post-1622 date, appends an alternative theory of his own that the Japanese version might have been executed a few years *before* the elevation to sainthood of Loyola and Xavier, and the inscription superimposed subsequently. This theory, however, seems to me too speculative to be taken into serious consideration here.



Indian women depicted in these hangings are for the most part in a class by themselves (see especially the women at Pls. V & XI, for their dress and jewellery is markedly provincial and corresponds very closely with contemporary accounts of Golconda fashion. "Women ordinarily wear a cloth, 12 cubits long and 2 broad, first tied round the waist, and then (brought) over the right shoulder; the head is never covered except that the aforesaid cloth passes over it."<sup>1</sup> In another contemporary document they are described as wearing "bracelets of gold, wherein are set small diamonds, rubies and emeralds. In their ears they wear many rings and jewels, and some of them one through the right nostril, wherein a pearl or ruby is commonly set, as also broad plates of gold for girdles, and about their necks many chains of small pearl and coral, or worser beads according to their estate, without other ornament on their head than their own hair, which being smoothe combed, is tied in a knot behind them."<sup>2</sup>

Summarising these remarks on subject-matter, we can say that Golconda cotton painters normally depended upon musters supplied to them by the commissioning agents, and that these included the most diverse pictorial themes — Persian and European, as well as Mughal, Deccani and Hindu. This diversity is represented not merely by different hangings intended for different markets but also by the combination of different pictorial conventions within each design.

### STYLE

Although, as we have shown, the Golconda cotton painter worked always from musters, it would be absurd — confronted with the designs reproduced here — to dismiss him simply as a copyist. In spite of many borrowed elements, we are nonetheless struck by certain transcending features of style which unite all the hangings into a single, clearly identifiable group and make them an important artistic achievement in their own right. Affinities of dye-colour are only one factor contributing to their identity. Even more significant is the strong feeling for purely decorative design which dominates the hangings both individually and as a group.

Unlike European tapestry, which is really easel-painting reproduced on the loom, the Golconda cotton painter used pictorial themes *only as subordinate elements in designs conceived purely decoratively*. Thus, even when borrowed elements have been traced to their source, nothing has really been said about the style of the hangings of a whole, and it is this more difficult and elusive aspect which we now have to consider.

First, let us recall the situation of Golconda in the broader context of South Indian culture. In the first half of the 16th century, the peninsula had been divided between the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar (with its capital less than 300 miles due west of the cotton-painting centres), and

<sup>1</sup> From an anonymous Dutch journal written between 1608 and 1610. *Relations of Golconda*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> William Methwold's journal, *ibid.*, p. 18.



the warring confederacies of smaller Islamic kingdoms of the Deccan, of which Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda were of chief importance. In addition, there was the Portuguese settlement of Goa — a constant thorn in the flesh of all parties — which vested in foreign hands strategic control of the western sea approaches.

In Vijayanagar kingdom there flourished a vigorous Hindu culture, including a distinctive tradition of wall-painting. Unfortunately, nothing survives apart from a few damaged temple murals, of which those at Lepakshi, Anantpur District, and Anegundi, near the site of the old capital, are best known.<sup>1</sup> In 1565, at the battle of Talikota, the Vijayanagar army was defeated by a confederacy of Islamic forces from the Deccan, and although the Hindu dynasty was able to consolidate at least a shadow of its former power further south and survive there another century, the great capital itself was destroyed and its population (including many artists and craftsmen) scattered. Out of this victory emerged a new culture in the Deccan, to which some contribution was made both by earlier Vijayanagar tradition and by Persian poets and artists patronised at the courts. The school of miniature painting which was an important expression of this new culture came into being under the rulers of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur and reached its full flowering under Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh of Bijapur (1580-1627), when both Mughal and European influences were also contributing to the style. By this time, Deccani painting was distinguished in particular by portraiture of remarkable sumptuousness and refinement, combined with a certain jewel-like delicacy of decorative treatment. With the death of Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh, however, the school, for want of proper patronage, disappears into sudden and somewhat mysterious obscurity, little more being known of it until half a century later, when it re-emerges, much weakened, under Abū'l-Hasan Qutb Shāh of Golconda (1672-1687).

If the three decades between 1620 and 1650 are accepted as the period of the cotton paintings under review, we shall have to recognise that they came into being fifty or more years after the collapse of the old Vijayanagar kingdom, and exactly within the period when the Deccani school of miniature painting appears to have suffered comparative decline. Let us now consider the extent to which all this is reflected in the hangings themselves.

The influence of the Vijayanagar style (as represented at Lepakshi and Anegundi) is immediately apparent, especially in the hanging at Pl. I. Comparing this piece with the Lepakshi mural reproduced at Pl. XX, Fig. 26, one cannot help being struck by similarities of treatment: the feet and heads shown in profile, turned to the left; the sweep of the dress; the swing of the girdles, and so on. We also notice a similar use of floral garlands to

<sup>1</sup> Neither of these sites have yet been properly studied or published; but a few illustrations appear in Stella Kramrisch's *Indian Painting in the Deccan*, London 1937. A short note on Lepakshi by C. Sivaramamurti appears in the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Calcutta, Vol. V, 1937, pp. 184-7. For illustrations of Lepakshi murals reproduced with this study I am indebted to my friend Mr. Richard Lannoy.



fill blank spaces above the heads of the figures, and of a narrow border with small diamond motives. Unfortunately, this is the only surviving Golconda hanging with 'Hindu' subject-matter, and it is therefore especially difficult to date accurately. The Lepakshi parallels certainly suggest, at first, a 16th century origin; but these must be weighed against equally close parallels with the rest of the hangings, which can be securely attributed to the period post-1620. Another factor to be remembered is that, although the Lepakshi and Anegundi murals indisputably represent a Vijayanagar tradition, they are themselves undated. There is no proof or certainty that they were painted before the somewhat arbitrary date of 1565 when the Vijayanagar army was suddenly defeated in battle. Nor do we know, on the basis of evidence at present available, if artists schooled in Vijayanagar actually visited the cotton-painting centres of Golconda, or whether Vijayanagar art traditions were the common heritage of the whole of this area. These and many other related questions await patient investigation before the hanging at Pl. I can be securely dated. In the meantime, my attribution of "c. 1600" is intended to allow for a margin of twenty-five years either way.<sup>1</sup>

The influences of the Deccani school of miniature painting are equally obvious in most of the hangings and have been mentioned in detail in the catalogue comments. Sometimes it is clear that the cotton-painter has worked direct from Deccani paintings in the form of musters (see p. 21 above). Even where this is not the case, however, we are often aware of a distinct Deccani 'feeling' in the figure drawing. It may be limited only to the hang of a girdle, a particular sitting posture, or the angle at which a turban is worn, but the subtly pervading influence is nevertheless clearly there. Besides copying direct from Deccani musters, therefore, one is tempted to think that the designers of the cotton paintings had assimilated something of general tradition of Deccani — especially Bijapur — painting under Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh (1580-1627).

The same may be said of European influence, reflected in particular in the treatment of the mother-and-child theme (Pl. V) and in the discreet assimilation of Renaissance ornament, as noted in the catalogue comments. In this connection, it is worth remembering that at least one European artist had been engaged to paint murals at the Bijapur capital, fragments of which survive.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, European brocaded textiles had been traded in Vijayanagar from the beginning of the 16th century,<sup>3</sup> and European works of art and craftsmanship of all kinds were in constant flow through the Goa enclave.<sup>4</sup> In the same category is the Chinese influence noted in several of the hangings (especially Pl. XI),

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the present whereabouts of this piece is unknown and that it cannot therefore be seen in its actual colours, makes dating even more difficult.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Cousins, *Bijapur and its Architectural Remains*, Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series, Vol. XXXVII, 1916, Pls. LXXV and LXXVI.

<sup>3</sup> *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, trans. by Longworth Dames, London 1918, Vol. I, p. 203, and Vol. II, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> The *Akbar-nāma* tells us that Akbar sent his craftsmen "to examine and bring to the Emperor's knowledge the various productions of art and skill to be found at that time. . ." *Akbar-nāma*, III, 322.



and which was conveyed mainly through porcelain — a commodity much coveted by the Deccan nobility.<sup>1</sup> One Dutch merchant reported that there was always a ready sale for Chinese porcelain at Petaboli itself, on account of the number of Persian merchants resident there.<sup>2</sup>

The only aspect of style which defies comparison with other contemporary schools of painting, either within or outside India, is the treatment of flowers and foliage, such as we see in its most beautiful and characteristic form at Pl. II. The Golconda cotton painter employed a strange iconography of floral forms, the characteristic motive being a single plant or tree which bears flowers of at least six unrelated species and often fruits as well. At Pl. II we see such flowering-trees (forerunners of the so-called palampore 'tree-of-life' of the late 17th and 18th centuries) interspersed with bamboos and single stem plants, the latter bearing one gigantic flower of fantastic form and shape.<sup>3</sup> This kind of floral iconography is extraordinary and unique for the period. Are we to conclude that it was an original invention of Golconda cotton-painting tradition, and that it characterised the local style even "before the Great Magore and Persian took so great affection unto fine paintings"? As we shall try to show in the concluding section, a conclusion on these lines, although unprovable, is at least plausible.

#### SOME SPECULATIVE CONCLUSIONS

So far, analysis and deduction have been on fairly firm ground. At no point has reasoning given way to speculation or departed far from fact. In this way, we can claim to have established beyond doubt the provenance of the hangings assembled together, as well as the approximate dates of execution and the social and economic conditions which brought them into being.

However, the picture is still incomplete, for nothing has been said about the kind of cotton paintings made in Golconda *before* 1620 (Pl. I having been already discussed as the only possible exception), when "the Persian and Great Magore" first became interested. Here, unfortunately, decisive evidence is lacking, and it must be recognised that the conclusions henceforth offered are based only on a few hints and clues.

We know that when the Dutch began trading at Petaboli in 1605, cotton paintings of this area were already famed for their exceptional quality, although in this context they are mentioned only in the form of *piece-goods*. For evidence of their being made also in the form of *hangings* at this early period, we are dependent on the French traveller, Pyrard

<sup>1</sup> See E. H. Hunt, "Old Hyderabad China," *Journal of Archaeological Society of Hyderabad*, January 1916.

<sup>2</sup> *Relations of Golconda*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere I have discussed a similarity between these flowers and those illustrated in Thomas Trevelyan's "Designs for Use in the Decorative Arts," dated 1608, a remarkable ms. with obvious oriental inspiration preserved at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington. Some drawings from this ms. are published with my paper, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style' in English Decorative Art".



de Laval, who in his description of the palace of the 'King of Maldives' which he saw in 1610, remarked in passing that the walls were draped with "hangings of silk or cotton, enriched with works, flowers and gold branches, and with colours dazzling to the view, such is the richness of the gold and colours exciting our admiration of the work : They come for the most part from China, Bengal, Masulipatam and St. Thome."<sup>1</sup>

Anyone with specialised knowledge of Eastern textile history will have no difficulty in recognising from this description the kind of hangings from China and Bengal. The first are undoubtedly the velvet hangings embroidered with branchwork patterns in heavy gold thread, which were among commodities regularly exported by the Chinese to the Malayan Archipelago, several examples of which are preserved in European textile collections.<sup>2</sup> The Bengal hangings of the period were the superb quilted Tussur-silk embroideries, many of which were shipped to Europe by the Portuguese and later by the Dutch and English.<sup>3</sup> There is little doubt, on this reasoning, that the "colours dazzling to view" referred to the painted cotton hangings of Masulipatam and St. Thome. It is also reasonable to assume that the designs were floral.

There the matter would have to be left, had I not chanced, while touring in Portugal, to come across some striking polychrome tilework decorating the fronts of certain church altars (Pl. XVIII, Fig. 24) which at once struck me as having an important bearing on the history of Golconda cotton painting. Although made in Portugal, the tilework in question is decorated in a style reminiscent in particular to the coverlet at Pl. II. Thereupon I set about to investigate when they were made and how the particular style came into being in Portugal. The first question was answered by general agreement among experts that such tiles were made in Portugal only between 1600 and 1670. Moreover, it is known that they came into being as the result of an order issued by the Bishop of Seville (Portugal and Spain then being united) to the effect that instead of employing expensive fabrics for the draping of altar fronts, henceforth use should be made of tiles "imitating, with the greatest possible perfection, the fabrics and embroideries of the day."<sup>4</sup> This advice was widely adopted, and while many tiles were made in imitation of Italian brocades, others were made to simulate Indian painted cottons. In a private letter, Senhor J. M. dos Santos Simoes, the leading

<sup>1</sup> This translation is a rather loose interpretation of the French, which is obscure in parts and reads as follows : "*Les chambres et stances interieures du Roy sont tapissées de tapisseries de soye ou de toile de cotton, enrichie d'ouvrages, fleurs et ramage d'or, et de couleurs qui eblouissent la veue, tat de la richesse de l'or et des couleurs, que do l'admiration de l'ouvrage : Elles viennent pour la plus part de la Chine, de Bengal, de Masulipatam et St. Thomas.*" Francois Pyrard, *Discours de Voyage des Francois aux Indes Orientales*, Paris 1611, pp. 58-60. The English translation published by the Hakluyt Society in 1887 is inadequate in this connection.

<sup>2</sup> A typical example is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, T. 36-1911.

<sup>3</sup> I have discussed these exhaustively in my paper, "Indo-Portuguese Embroideries of Bengal," *Indian Art and Letters* (Journal of Royal India Society), London, Vol. 26, 1952.

<sup>4</sup> The original reads "... imitando, com a possivel perfeicao os tecidos e bordados da epoca" J. M. dos Santos Simões, *Alguns Azulejos de Evora*, Evora 1945, p. 25.



authority on the history of Portuguese tilework, tells me that he has personally recorded about eighty churches in Portugal with altar fronts in this style, and that all are attributable to the period 1600 to 1670.<sup>1</sup> It follows, therefore, that *at least by 1600, the prototype fabrics which gave rise to this tilework fashion were already a familiar sight in Portuguese churches.* Moreover, this lends independent support to the assumption already made that Pls. II and III are probably the earliest of the whole group (with the exception of Pl. I, which bears no comparison), and represent a floral style already established in Golconda before "the Great Magore and Persian" began to show interest.

In 16th century Persian brocade weaving, the human figure had already become a well-established feature of floral designs, and it is easy to infer that when Golconda cotton paintings were first commissioned for the Persian market, it was insisted that they, too, should include human figures. But what human figures? Left to themselves, the cotton painters would have included Hindu figures and themes, hardly suited to Islamic taste. So musters were provided.

In my view, these musters were seldom, if ever, in the form of complete designs to be copied. They consisted, most probably, of pattern-books filled with a variety of unrelated figure-groups, rather like the pattern-books traditionally used by embroiders and engravers in many parts of the world.<sup>2</sup>

These pattern-books would have been in the charge of the Komatis who, as earlier explained, were intermediaries between foreign merchant and producer. In commissioning hangings for the Persian market, the Komati would have indicated to the designer certain pages of the pattern-book for suitable themes to introduce into his design; for the Mughal or European markets, other pages would have been indicated.

In my further opinion, there were very few designers engaged in work of this kind, and they probably constituted a separate group within the community of cotton painters, like the *naqqāsh* of the north Indian weaving centres. (In this connection, it is worth recalling that at the height of the export trade in Kashmir shawls in the 19th century, there were said to have been only five or six *naqqāsh*-families responsible for the hundreds of different shawl designs produced annually<sup>3</sup>). Perhaps, in Golconda, there were only one or two families specialising in the initial

<sup>1</sup> The letter reads: "I understand that you are interested in altar fronts inspired by eastern 'palampores' and kindred printed textiles. . . I have recorded about eighty of these altar fronts — spread all over Portugal — and all different. This type of 'antependia' was in fashion in this country from the early 17th century until about 1670. They are in rich polychrome and conform with a standardized arrangement. The altar front is composed of three main parts, viz., the upper frieze, the side panes and the central part. The friezes and the side panes are always inspired by brocade patterns with rhythmical floral ornament, sometimes enlivened with cherubs. The central part is more elaborate and obviously inspired by eastern printed textiles."

<sup>2</sup> Many dating from the European Middle Ages and later are catalogued by A. Lotz, *Bibliographie der Modelbücher*, Leipzig 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Discussed in detail in my monograph, *Shawls: A Study in Indo-European Influences*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 1955, p. 7.



outline-drawing. Among the hangings reproduced here, it is safe to assume that those at Plates were drawn—in parts at any rate—by the same hand, though the actual dyeing might have engaged a number of different families.

### SUMMARY

The hangings brought together in this study have been shown to represent a local tradition of cotton painting which flourished in the region of Petaboli and Palakollu on the Golconda seaboard. All of them (with the possible exception of the piece at Pl. I) were executed within the three decades 1620 to 1650 and represent the culmination of an older tradition, known throughout Asia under the misnomer, 'Masulipatam chintz', after the port from which such goods were exported.

The industry producing them was comparatively small and highly specialised, its pre-eminence over all other schools of contemporary Indian cotton painting having depended largely on the superiority of dye-materials locally available—in particular, the special quality of the *chay*-root which grew wild on sandy islands of the Krishna delta.

The craftsmen involved were caste Hindus working on a joint-family basis and practising fairly advanced division of labour, so that each hanging passed through many hands in the making, and the initial designer was unlikely to have been involved in the dyeing or 'painting'.

In the period concerned, the chief markets were in Persia, the Mughal dominions and Europe. As tastes and fashions represented by these markets were foreign to local tradition, the cotton painters depended on the supply of musters from which to copy. These musters were seldom, if ever, complete designs in themselves but consisted only of incidental and unrelated figure-groups which the cotton painter incorporated as subordinate elements in designs of his own decorative conception. Thus, no matter how hybrid or eclectic were individual elements in a design, they were transcended by a decorative style which owed nothing directly to foreign inspiration and gave individuality and distinction to this particular school of cotton painting.

This decorative style has affinities both with what we know of the Vijayanagar tradition of painting as well as with the Deccani school of miniature painting as it flourished at Bijapur in the reign of Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh (1580-1627). At the same time it has an individuality for which such influences do not fully account, and which earn it the independent title of the Golconda school of cotton painting, meriting a high place of its own among artistic achievements of the early 17th century.





PLATE A. Coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D.  $2'3'' \times 2'8\frac{1}{2}''$ . Heeramaneck Gallery, New York.  
Colour block courtesy of Heeramaneck Gallery.



CATALOGUE AND DESCRIPTION OF PLATES

PLATE A

Coverlet: painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1630-1640.

H. 2' 3" W. 2' 8½".

The Heeramanek Gallery, New York.

*Description*

This coverlet illustrates a conventional theme of Peris dancing to music. The Peris are depicted as male figures in Deccani costume, including the six-pointed *jāma*. They are interspersed with varied flora and fauna, including a separate decorative group of deer among rocks. Surrounding the whole is a broad border filled with Persian-styled rosettes alternating with maltese crosses.

*Comment*

This is one of the most attractive of the group of small coverlets which include Pls. XII to XV, the drawing delicate, and the figures beautifully disposed, showing that the draughtsman was clearly a pictorial artist in his own right. The six-pointed *jāma* is paralleled in at least one Deccani painting of the period of Ibrahim II (1580-1627).<sup>1</sup> As the pointed *jāma* was still being worn in the Deccan in the second half of the century,<sup>2</sup> this detail cannot be taken as evidence of early dating. However, comparing this design in general points of style with the other small coverlets, and also with the Brooklyn hanging (cf. treatment of the deer at Pl. VI, Fig. 7), I consider that it belongs to the 1630s rather than the 1640s.

*Bibliography*

*Textiles and Ornaments of India*, ed. by Monroe Wheeler, Museum of Modern Art, New York 1956, p. 14.

PLATE I, FIGURE 1

Wall-hanging: painted cotton. Golconda, c. 1600.

Measurements and colours unknown.

Preserved in an unknown Japanese collection.

*Description*

The design is composed of six pillared compartments surmounted by *makara* heads, each framing a group of figures in South Indian, Hindu dress. At the top there is a row of Hindu temple pavilions (*mandapas* or *gopurams*) in conventional South Indian style of the 16th century, interspersed with coconut and other trees, monkeys and birds. Various small niches in the architecture are

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Douglas Barrett, *Painting of the Deccan*, London 1958, Pl. 4.

<sup>2</sup> E. g., *The Art of India and Pakistan* (Commemorative catalogue of the Royal Academy Exhibition, 1947-48), London 1950, Pl. 147.



occupied by figures, some apparently lay, others being conventional representations of Hindu deities, including Ganeśa. A narrow border at top and bottom (also sides ?) is filled with a triple-dot-and-diamond-motive.

*Comment*

I have already commented on similarities of style between this and the Lepakshi murals, details of which are reproduced at Pl. XX. Also worth noting are parallels between the floral pendants here and those appearing in the Anegundi murals.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, links between this hanging and others in the group are equally striking (especially such details as the coconut trees and monkeys, which are repeated in the hanging at Pl. VI, Fig. 7). The fact that the subject-matter is Hindu may mean that this hanging was made for one of the petty courts in the Carnatic, which are all that remained of Vijayanagar dynastic power in the early 17th century. There is no apparent logic in the original Japanese attribution of this piece to "China, c. 1300" (cf. bibliographic reference below) ; and O. C. Gangoly's subsequent claim that it was made in Orissa, though nearer the mark, is equally unsubstantiated.

*Bibliography*

Yamamoto, *Examples of Japanese Fine Art*, Vol. X, Tokyo 1898-9.

O. C. Gangoly, "The Story of a Cotton Printed Fabric from Orissa," *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. 5, 1919, pp. 325-330.

**PLATE II, FIGURE 2**

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1625-1635.

H. 8' 1" W. 10' 8".

A white ground in the field, the design being in shades of red, brown, green, blue and purple.

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I.M. 160-1929.

*Description*

The design in the field is intended to be seen from opposite sides. *Side I* : Two male figures in Indo-Persian costume are shooting black partridges (*Francolinus francolinus*) and pigeons, while another figure, similarly dressed, is being served with drink by a woman with head-scarf and chequered gown of unfamiliar style. At the extreme left are two comb ducks or nukhtas (*Sarcidiornis melanotus*). The rest of the ground is filled with flowering and fruiting trees of fanciful invention, bamboo plants, and various fauna, including winged deer. *Side II* : Two figures in Indo-Persian costume are engaged in bird-shooting, as above ; a third and fourth are drinking. The rest of the ground is filled with the flora and fauna already described. Surrounding the whole is a broad border with Persian-style palmettes and Italianate reversed-scroll motives.

<sup>1</sup> S. Kramrisch, *A Survey of Painting in the Deccan*, London 1937, p. 114.



When acquired by the Museum in 1929, it was recorded that the back of the coverlet bore "a series of stock-taking dates and data, ranging between 1639 and 1650." Owing to the fragile condition of the fabric (the iron in the black dye having rotted the fibres), it was subsequently stitched to a linen ground for preservation, and there is now no simple way of verifying the inscriptions.

#### *Comment*

This and the piece at Pl. III are perhaps the most beautiful in design of all surviving Golconda cotton paintings. It was acquired from the same Delhi dealer (Imre Schweiger) as the Brooklyn Museum hanging (Pls. VI-IX) and was said to have also come from Amber Palace, Jaipur. The freshness of conception and the freedom with which individual motives are treated suggest that it is a comparatively early piece.

This is confirmed by details of costume. The fan-like end-pieces of the turbans are not as stiff as we find them at Pl. IV, and the closest parallels are in Persian paintings of the 1620s.<sup>1</sup>

Italianate influence in the form of reversed-scroll motives in the border is a reminder of the regular trade between Italy and South India in the 16th century<sup>2</sup> and the fact that European mural painters were employed by at least one Deccani ruler.<sup>3</sup> Such motives as this were probably part of the common stock of European influence in the Deccan.

When first published (see below) this piece was tentatively attributed to Mughal India, it being thought to reflect the passing influence of Persian taste at Jahangir's court. However, in light of all the other evidence considered here, this purely speculative theory can no longer be entertained.

#### *Bibliography*

Victoria and Albert Museum, *Review of Principal Acquisitions during the Year 1929*, London 1930, pp. 70-71.

#### *PLATE III, FIGURE 3*

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1625-1635.  
H. 7' 9" W. 10' 8".

A white ground in the field, the design being in shades of red, brown, green, blue and purple.  
Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad, no. 403.

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the Leningrad *Shāh-nāma*, Giusalian and Diakonov, *Iranskiye Miniatury v Rukopisiakh Shah-name Leningradskikh Sobraniy*, Pl. 33.

<sup>2</sup> After the departure of Fitch and Newberry from Goa, Linschoten wrote that "there never arrived any strangers, either English or other, by land in the said countries, but only Italians, which daily traffic overland and use continual trade, coming and going that way." *Travels*, Hak. Soc., London, Vol. II, p. 167. Details of this trade are given by Barbosa, Pires, and others. I am discussing this trade in a separate article under preparation, which will be published in the *Journal of Indian Textile History*, Ahmedabad, No. IV, 1958.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Cousins, *Bijapur and its Architectural Remains*, Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series of Monographs, Vol. XXXVII, 1916, Pls. LXXV and LXXVI.



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

### *Description*

The design in the field corresponds in general effect with the design of the previous piece (Pl. II). However, there are significant variations of detail. Instead of hunting scenes, this coverlet depicts only five figures drinking. The black partridges and comb ducks also appear, but in addition there are Chinese mythical monsters apparently copied from porcelain. The broad border is the same.

### *Comment*

Most of the comments made in connection with Pl. II apply also here. There can be no doubt that the two pieces are exactly contemporary and that the same hands were involved in the making of each.

### PLATE IV, FIGURE 4

Wall-hanging : painted cotton. Made under European (probably Dutch) patronage.

Golconda, 1635-1645.

L. 7' 2½" W. 3' 9".

The ground of red, brown and blue, the design being partly reserved in white and partly picked out in shades of red, brown, purple and blue.

Victoria and Albert Museum, no. 687-1898.

### *Description*

A formally planned design with two main panels in the centre. The upper one depicts two lay princely figures and two boys in Indo-Persian costume ; the lower, a drinking scene with two Dutchmen and two women (Eurasian ?). Separating the panels is a band with vases, chests and swords. Surrounding the whole, a border of smaller panels in the form of architectural niches, each framing a human figure. At the top are other architectural motives, including 'onion' domes ; and along the bottom is a band filled with Indo-Persian figures interspersed with varied flora and fauna, including fighting rams, deer, peacocks, partridges and pigeons. The figures include a Persian merchant apparently bargaining over the purchase of a fighting cock.

### *Comment*

As explained in the text (p. 23), the plan is apparently borrowed from a Jesuit engraving of a type celebrating the elevation to sainthood of Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier (cf. Pl. XIX).

In adapting the plan to his own purposes, the cotton painter has substituted lay themes.

Earlier authorities suggested that the two main scenes taken together represent the visit of a European delegation to a native court, the row of vases, boxes and swords being thought to represent gifts of homage. This interpretation seems to me untenable. It does not explain why the Europeans are being waited upon by Eurasian servants, nor why a similar row of 'presents' should appear in the hanging at Pl. V. I see no reason to expect the design to tell a connected story, the general intention being purely fanciful and decorative.



In place of small outer panels which, in the original Jesuit engraving, would have illustrated the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary (cf. Pl. XIX), the cotton painter has substituted conventional architectural niches. Similar niches appear in late Safavid silk brocades (cf. Pl. XVI), but it is difficult in this case to say whether the Persian or Indian convention came first. Architecturally, of course, the convention was originally Persian. Assuming that it was first adopted as a textile convention by the Persian weaver, it is reasonable to suppose that such expensive brocaded fabrics were subsequently copied in the cheaper technique.

The large, somewhat cumbersome turban worn by the two main figures is of late Safavid type, not commonly worn in India. The stiffly-projecting, fan-like end to the turban first appears in Persian painting in the 1620s but does not become a characteristic feature of Persian dress until the period of Shāh 'Abbās II (1642-1667).<sup>1</sup> In the form it appears here it is unlikely to have been seen in India before the 1630s.

Costume details of the two Dutchmen (smooth ruff, high and narrow hat, short jerkin, knee breeches, etc.) were common wear in Holland in the 1620s,<sup>2</sup> but would have persisted among Dutchmen in the East for another two decades (a European figure wearing ruff and identical hat appears in an illustration to the Windsor Castle *Shāh-Jahān-nāma*, which has a colophon dated 1657). The costume and iconography of the two women are something of a puzzle in their strange mixture of Eastern and Western details. The cock seen in the folds of the *sārī* is presumably a fighting cock, such affectionate treatment of prize-birds being a common sight even today in Bali and other places where cock-fighting is still a popular sport. The woman on the left (holding *surāhī*) is apparently serving wine. The goblet on the tablet is a familiar contemporary European type of rib-moulded glass; and the sweetdish is clearly recognisable as contemporary (probably Italian) *lattice* work. The *surāhīs* are typically late Safavid.

The dog is probably a European mastiff, these and other breeds having been regularly shipped to India in the early 17th century as gifts much welcomed by Indian royalty and nobility.<sup>3</sup>

The 'onion' domes at the top are repeated in several of the hangings and are reminiscent of such domes on the tomb of Muhammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh of Golconda (d. 1611)<sup>4</sup> and of much other Deccani architecture.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph M. Upton, *Notes on Persian Costume of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Metropolitan Museum Studies, Vol. II, Pt. 2, New York 1930, p. 216. In addition to sources cited by Mr. Upton, I would like to add the Leningrad *Shāh-nāma* dated 1642-51 (Giusalian and Diakonov, *Iranskiye Miniatury v Rukopisiakh Shah-name Leningradskikh Sobraniy*, Pls. 37 and 43) and the *Shāh-nāma* dated 1648 at Windsor Castle (Holmes Catalogue, No. 151), both of which represent the turban in exactly the form it appears here.

<sup>2</sup> F. van Thienen, *Costume in the Great Age of Holland, 1600-1660*, London 1951.

<sup>3</sup> In 1613 the Directors of the English company resolved that two mastiffs should be included in every ship sailing to India (India Office Archives, Court Book I, minutes dated 18-12-1613). In 1614 the company's representatives at the Mughal Court wrote that among the most suitable objects for presents would be "some curled water spaniel of the greatest size with a bloodhound or two" and that "they would be very much welcome, for they, (i.e., Jahangir and his courtiers) will hardly be persuaded that they can be taught to fetch or find things lost . . ." *Letters Received by the E. I. C.*, Vol. II, 1613-15, London 1897, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Sha Rocco, *A Guide to Golconda Fort and Tombs*, Hyderabad, n. d., Pl. 10. Domes of the same kind sometimes appear at the head of Deccani miniatures (e.g., Douglas Barrett, *Islamic Painting in the Deccan*, Pl. 3).



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

### *Bibliography*

W. S. Hadaway, *Cotton Painting and Printing in the Madras Presidency*, Madras 1917, fig. 25.

G. P. Baker, *Calico Painting and Printing in the East Indies*, London 1921, Pl. 37 (in colour).

*The Art of India and Pakistan* (Commemorative Catalogue of the Royal Academy Exhibition, 1947-48), ed. by Sir Leigh Ashton, London 1950, no. 1028.

### *PLATE V, FIGURE 5*

Wall-hanging: painted cotton. Made under European (probably Dutch) patronage. Golconda, 1635-45. (The outer floral border is an 18th-century addition.)

Overall measurements: L. 8' 3½" W. 6' 5".

Ground of red, blue and yellow, the design being partly reserved in white and partly picked out in shades of red, brown, blue and purple.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 20.79.

### *Description*

A formal plan with two main panels in the centre. The upper one depicts a man and woman in Deccani costume, the latter holding an infant; the lower, three courtesans in typical Golconda dress and jewellery. Separating the two panels is a band with vases, chests and a sword. Surrounding the whole, a border of smaller panels in the form of architectural niches, each framing a human figure. At the top are other architectural motives, including 'onion' domes; and along the bottom a band filled with Indo-Persian figures interspersed with varied flora and fauna. Stitched to each side is a strip apparently cut from another hanging of the same period. The strip on the left includes two panels with European figures, one an equestrian portrait (Pl. XVII). The strip on the right has a standing male figure dressed in Deccani style, with European sword, and above him other figures, including polo-players and a dignitary on horseback attended by servant with umbrella.

### *Comment*

This piece is clearly of the same date and origin as the preceding hanging (Pl. IV), and the comments regarding Jesuit influence apply also to this piece.

The couple in the main panel are apparently Hindu. As important regional administrative posts in Golconda — including provincial governorships — were held by Hindus,<sup>1</sup> they may be intended to represent a couple of that social status.

<sup>1</sup> The post of regional governor in Golconda was an annual appointment farmed out to the highest bidder. Once appointed, a governor was free to extort revenue in any manner he pleased, but was under penalty of death, torture or imprisonment if he failed to render the full sum contracted. It was said that such posts were reserved for Hindus because they could be punished more ruthlessly in the event of failure (a Sayyid Muhammadan being immune from capital punishment by his own brotherhood). In this connection, see *Relations of Golconda*, pp. 57 and 82.



The three women in the lower panel wear costume and jewellery exactly corresponding with courtesan fashion of Golconda as described by contemporary travellers (see p. 24 above).

The European figures are of particular interest for the light they throw on dating. The equestrian portrait (apparently a field marshal), is copied from a well-known type of Anglo-Dutch engraving in vogue as portraiture in the 1620s and 1630s.<sup>1</sup> In this case the prototype can be fairly precisely dated on evidence of costume. The horseman's semi-circular collar (known as whisk or golilla), for instance, was not worn in England or Holland after 1630, when it gave way to the wide falling collar.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the baldrick or shoulder-belt cannot be earlier than 1625. These two factors, considered in relation to hair-style, T-moustache, belt and buskins, fix the original engraving to the years 1628-30. From this we can assume that it could not have been copied in India much before 1630 at the earliest.

Details of Indian and Indo-Persian costume support a post-1630 dating. The large, cumbersome, Safavid turban worn by some of the smaller figures with projecting, fan-like end-piece we have already explained as a more characteristic Persian fashion of the 1640s, and the same can be said of the plumed turban worn by the figure on the right.

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Frances Morris, "An Indian Hanging," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, Vol. 20, 1925, pp. 143-152.

#### *PLATE VI, FIGURE 6 to PLATE IX, FIGURE 13*

Wall-hanging in seven sections (formerly joined) : painted cotton. Golconda, 1630-1640.

Each panel, 8' 3½" × 3' 2". Overall measurements of original hanging: H. 8' 3½" W. 23'.

White ground, the design being in shades of red, brown, blue and purple.

Brooklyn Museum, New York, no. 14. 719-1-7.

#### *Description*

The hanging was originally composed of seven rectangular panels sewn together, without any apparent connection or sequence in subject-matter.

*Pl. VI, Fig. 6.* Sub-divided into four compartments, each with Portuguese figures. A central figure in each group is seated in conventional Indian *padmāsana* or *lalitāsana* pose, as if holding court. Above, there are a number of 'onion' domes and conventional architectural niches framing Indian figures, rather cursorily drawn.

<sup>1</sup> See A. M. Hind, *Engraving in England in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Pt. 2, Cambridge 1955, Pls. 172-173, 191 and 241.

<sup>2</sup> C. Willet and P. Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the 17th Century*, London 1955, p. 37. Also, Graham Reynolds, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Costume*, London 1951, p. 12.



GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

*Pl. VI, Fig. 7.* Sub-divided into four compartments, each with figures in Indo-Persian costume, some with flowing scarves worn in conventional Deccani manner, others wearing the large rounded turban with stiffly-projecting fan-like end-piece earlier discussed (see p. 36 above). Along the bottom is a frieze of deer and comb ducks or *nukhtas*. The same 'onion' domes appear at the top, but instead of architectural niches in Islamic style, they here appear in the form of miniature Hindu *mandapas* with monkeys sporting on the roof (cf. Pl. I).

*Pl. VII, Fig. 8.* Sub-divided into four compartments. The top three depict Hindu court scenes, the figures being in South Indian (Vijayanagar) costume. The bottom panel depicts elephants with riders, and to the left there is a water-carrier with pigskin container. The top is similar to Pl. VI, Fig. 6.

*Pl. VII, Fig. 9.* Sub-divided into four compartments. The upper one apparently depicting European and Eurasian ladies; the lower three, figures in conventional Siamese costume, some of them carrying krises. The top is similar to Pl. VI, Fig. 6.

*Pl. VIII, Fig. 10.* Sub-divided into four compartments, each containing figures of uncertain identity, possibly Javanese. Krises are carried by some of the figures. The top is similar to Pl. VI, Fig. 6.

*Pl. VIII, Fig. 11.* Sub-divided into four compartments, each with figures dressed in Turkoman style. In the upper one, a prince or king is apparently being attended by three European women. In the other panels, various envoys are being received. The top is similar to Pl. VI, Fig. 6.

*Pl. IX, Fig. 12.* Sub-divided into five compartments, each containing tribal hunters wearing leaf-skirts and leaf-plumes. Besides bows-and-arrows, they are using a kind of snare attached to the end of a pole.

*Comment*

In a most readable and informative article by Stewart Culin describing how he acquired this fine hanging forty years ago, it is revealed that it originally came from Amber Palace, Jaipur (having been bought from the same dealer—Imre Schweiger—who obtained the hanging at Pl. II from Amber Palace). It was said to have been only one among a number of similar hangings from Amber Palace, then in dealers' hands.

One clue to dating is provided by the Portuguese costumes (Pl. VI, Fig. 6). The breeches are of the type known as gallyhose, worn in Europe between 1580 and 1630, and the fact that they are depicted with conspicuous garter rosettes indicates a date after 1610. The epaulettes also point to a date later than this. The high-crowned hats with pronounced brims were worn in Portugal between 1605 and 1620. The combined evidence therefore suggests Portuguese fashion of the second decade of the century, which would probably



have persisted in the East (where the Portuguese were notoriously conservative in matters of dress) until at least 1640.<sup>1</sup> (There was no Portuguese settlement actually in Golconda at this period, but Portuguese ships sometimes called at Masulipatam to trade.<sup>2</sup>) The women, it will be noticed, are commonly represented with curly hair, characteristic of their treatment in Persian art at this period.<sup>3</sup>

The identification of the tribal hunters dressed in leaf-skirts presents a problem for the anthropologist. I have combed the relevant literature but found nothing to help. On the other hand, it is necessary to point out that leaf-skirted hunters appear commonly in South Indian art from the 12th century onwards. We find them, for instance, in Hoysala sculptures,<sup>4</sup> and also in ivory carvings.<sup>5</sup> Even more significant in this connection is their appearance in the Lepakshi murals (Pl. XX, Fig. 27) in a form very similar to those represented here. From all this we can safely assume that, whether or not this particular tribe is identifiable, there is no doubt that leaf-skirted hunters were a well-established convention in South Indian art from an early period. There is no reason, therefore, to follow Stewart Culin in looking for sources outside India.

Another significant fact is that the Hindu temple *maṇḍapas* with monkeys disporting on the roof and the coconut trees at the top of Pl. VI, Fig. 7 are closely paralleled in the hanging at Pl. I, which shows the strongest links with Lepakshi.

#### *Bibliography*

Stewart Culin, "The Story of the Painted Curtain," *Good Furniture Magazine*, New York, September 1918, pp. 133-147.

#### *PLATE X, FIGURE 14*

Coverlet: painted cotton. Made under Dutch patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.

9' x 6' 5".

White ground, the design being in shades of red, blue, brown and purple.

Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, no. 12132.

#### *Description*

The design consists of a number of scenes depicting the arrival of Dutch ships and officials at an Indian port. The scenes face opposite ways. *Side I*: In the centre, a conventional

<sup>1</sup> I have been guided towards these conclusions by my colleague Mr. Brian Reade, author of *Costume of the Western World: The Dominance of Spain, 1550-1660*, London 1951.

<sup>2</sup> *Relations of Golconda*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, European ladies depicted in Safavid tilework: Arthur Lane, *Later Islamic Pottery*, London 1957, Pl. 56a.

<sup>4</sup> *Album of Exhibition of Indian Art*, New Delhi 1948, Pl. 17.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, the Victoria and Albert Museum's fine 'antelope comb,' dating from the 16th or early 17th century (I. S. 561-1890).



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

architectural setting with two Dutchmen sitting in European chairs, and outside, a flagstaff with Dutch flags. Below, to the left and right, two armed Dutch ships drawing in their sails on arrival at port. Between the ships (and to the right) are groups of Dutchmen, apparently having disembarked and in the act of greeting Indian officials and fellow European traders. At the right and left centre, there are other conventional architectural settings, one framing a Dutch family receiving a visit from an Indian and apparently watching a dancing performance — the dancer and musicians being grouped outside beneath a flagpole with Dutch flags. The other architectural setting, on the left side, frames various Indo-Persian figures. *Side II:* To the right is a procession of Dutchmen, some on horseback, others being carried in palanquins accompanied by bearers, one with umbrella and another carrying a Dutch flag with the insignia of the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C. = Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie). Walking ahead of the European party is a native with drums and wind instruments, and in the forefront a figure with two dogs on leash. The procession is being entertained in its passage by female dancers and sword-fighters. In addition to the main scenes described, there are various incidental scenes with Indian and European figures, and the whole is freely interspersed with all manner of flora and fauna. A narrow outer border contains a repeat of leopards killing deer.

### *Comment*

The Dutch costume and hair-style depicted in this coverlet suggest a slightly later date than the hangings at Pls. IV and V. Also, the luxurious mode of life enjoyed by the Europeans points to a stage when the Dutch were no longer struggling to establish themselves but had begun to reap the fruits of a settled trade.

The presence of a number of European women is a reminder of contemporary changes in Dutch official policy towards the matrimonial habits of employees. At first, resident factors in India had mostly adopted concubines; but in 1622 orders were issued that henceforth no factors would be permitted to live with Indian women out of wedlock, and that those who married non-Europeans would not be allowed to return to Europe. In order to ease the situation, the company despatched from Holland "eighty young girls, who in time will make honest marriages in the Indies".<sup>1</sup> Here, we are clearly witnessing the outcome of this policy. The wind instruments featured in the band are identical to those featured in some of the Lepakshi murals.

This piece has always been described in France as illustrating "Le Réception des Ambassadeurs". However, there was no Dutch ambassador on the Coromandel Coast. We can be certain that the scenes represent the arrival at a port such as Masulipatam of ships fresh from Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, East Indies, 1622-24*, no. 343.



The figures to whom special honour is paid are simply the senior factors, who were commonly received in this style as we know from literary sources.

#### *Bibliography*

H. Clouzot, "Les Toiles Peintes de l'Inde au Pavillon de Marsan," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 54e annee, 2e semestre, Paris 1912, pp. 282-294.

G. P. Baker, *Calico Painting and Printing in the East Indies*, London 1921, fig. 60.

A. M. Lubberhuizen-van Gelder, "Onze Voorouders op de Coromandelkust," *Cultural Indie*, Leiden, November-December, 1941.

#### *PLATE XI, FIGURE 15*

Wall-hanging (incomplete): painted cotton. Made for the Mughal market. Golconda, 1640-1650.

Approx. 7' × 14'.

The ground mainly red or white; the design in shades of red, brown, blue, purple and green. Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad.

#### *Description*

As preserved, this hanging is probably little more than half its original width. The design is composed of a number of panels and niches of varying sizes, each framing groups of human figures. Among them are Indians in Indian and Indo-Persian costume, female figures in typical Golconda costume and jewellery, and Europeans (one couple being dressed in mixed European and pseudo-oriental finery with freak features). Above, there are various conventional architectural motives, including 'onion' domes and battlements, and conventional floral decoration interspersed with courting couples and fauna, including mythical dragons and birds copied from Chinese porcelain.<sup>1</sup> Along the bottom is a broad band filled with various Indo-Persian and European figures, some engaged in hunting. A narrow band running along the top is filled with palmettes and fantastic beasts apparently influenced by European heraldry.

#### *Comment*

This hanging has some decorative elements in common with those at Pls. III and IV, but is of a slightly later date judging by details of European costume and hair-style. The male figures wear the wide falling collar which did not come into fashion in Europe until the 1630s.

<sup>1</sup> In 1610 Schorer noted that Chinese porcelain was much in demand at Petaboli on account of the number of Persian merchants resident there. *Relations of Golconda*, p. 55. There was of course no direct trade between China and India at this period, but Chinese wares were easily procurable at intermediate ports such as Bantam in Java, Achin in Sumatra, and Pegu in Burma.



PLATE XII, FIGURE 16

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.  
H. 2' 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". W. 2' 2".

The ground of the field described as violet ; the border, yellow. The design in shades of red, blue, violet, yellow and green.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 28.159.3.

*Description*

The design in the field is composed of groups of human figures interspersed with a variety of flora and fauna, including deer, leopards, birds and butterflies. Reading from left to right along the top and bottom, the figural groups are as follows : a youth in Persian dress is being proffered a porcelain dish by a servant, while holding a cup of wine in the left hand ; a courtly figure in Indo-Persian costume is being handed a cup by one servant while another servant holds a *surāhī* to pour out a drink ; a courtly figure in Persian costume holds a cup to be filled from a porcelain jug by a servant ; a courtly figure in Persian costume holds in his left hand a cup and in the right a pineapple ; a courting couple in Indian dress ; a regal figure with beard holding a cup in his right hand, with a tame parakeet about to drink from it. Surrounding the whole is a broad border with compartments alternately red and violet on a yellow ground, enclosing and surrounded by conventionalized leaf and floral motives, set between narrow guard stripes with reciprocating trefoil pattern in red and black.

According to Joseph Breck (see below) the back is inscribed in one corner in black ink in Devanāgarī characters with names. These are scarcely legible, but include ' Lachman Gajanan ' (presumed to be names of clerks) ; also the dates 1061 (A.D. 1650) and 1062 (A.D. 1651).

*Comment*

This design has more authentically Persian elements than other Golconda cotton paintings, and some of the figures seem to have been lifted direct from Persian painting. *A very significant fact is that three figures in this design are exactly repeated in the design at Pl. XV, Fig. 19, indicating that they were copied from a common source.* (The bearded figure at bottom right is repeated at the top left of Pl. XV, Fig. 19; the seated figure at top centre reappears at bottom centre of Pl. XV, Fig. 19; and jug-carrier at top right reappears in Pl. XV, Fig. 19 near the bottom right.)

Persian costume details (in particular, the cone-topped hats) exclude an origin earlier than the 1630s and make the 1640s more likely.<sup>1</sup> Had it not been for the 1650 inventory date, I would have placed this piece in the 1650s.

<sup>1</sup> For parallels in Persian painting, see in particular the Leningrad *Shāh-nāma* dated 1641-51 (Giusalian and Diakonov, *Iranskiye Miniaturi v Rukopisiakh Shah-name Leningradskikh Sobraniy*, Pls. 35, 37 and 43) ; and the Windsor Castle *Shāh-nāma* dated 1648 *passim*. Also relevant in this connection is the famous Stockholm velvet-brocade given by the Czar of Russia to Queen Christina of Sweden, supposedly on the latter's accession to the throne in 1644 (Anges Geijer, *Oriental Textiles in Sweden*, Copenhagen 1951, Pl. 15). What is significant is not so much the cone-topped hat itself (which first appears in the second decade of the century) but the tilt at which it is worn.



*Bibliography*

Joseph Breck, *Four Seventeenth-century Pintadoes*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum Studies, New York 1929, pp. 3-15.

*PLATE XIII, FIGURE 17*

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.

H. 2' 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " W. 3'.

The ground in the field is described as red ; the border, brownish-yellow. The design is in shades of red, blue, yellow and green.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 28.159.1.

*Description*

The design in the field is composed of groups of human figures interspersed with varied flora and fauna, including goats, hippopotamus, rams, peacocks and other birds. Reading from left to right and from top to bottom, the figural groups are as follows : youth in Persian costume reclining on a mat ; a courtly figure in Indian costume being served with wine by a male and female servant ; a courtly figure in Indian costume feeding a goat, while an attendant approaches with a peacock under his arm ; a seated musician with stringed instrument (*tambur* ?), surrounded by servants with wine jugs (*surāhīs*), and behind him a male figure in Persian costume with European sword ; two courtly female figures, one engaged in embroidery, the other drinking, both attended by servants with fans ; a courtly figure in Persian costume eating ginger or sweetmeats from a porcelain jar, and beside him another courtly figure with drinking cup ; a Portuguese returning from a shoot with two rabbits in his left hand followed by servant carrying a dead deer. Surrounding the whole is a broad border filled with palmettes and cross-shaped compartments.

According to Joseph Breck (see below) the reverse side bears an inscription in black ink in Persian characters (I preserve the published transliteration) :

*tarikh tashkhan*

*seneh 1084*

*arz (yak-zar ?)*

*59.225.*

This has been translated : Date of (putting in) tashkhan year 1084 (A.D. 1673) — width (one zaar ?) — 59.225.

*Comment*

Although the general effect is Persian, Indian elements in this design are on the whole more obvious. It would probably have fitted well with Golconda court taste in the reign of 'Abdullā



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Qutb Shāh (1626-72), when Hindu influence was growing (the Shāh himself being said to have married a *brāhmaṇī*). We are also conscious of the intrusion of what might be called rustic naivety, reflected in the incident of a courtly figure dallying with a common village goat.

Costume details correspond in the main with those depicted in the preceding piece and the arguments apply. The Portuguese costume is more typical of an earlier period, but its appearance here can be explained by Portuguese conservatism in matters of dress. The servant fanning the lady at the bottom left is apparently wearing a Dutch hat.

### *Bibliography*

Joseph Breck, *Four Seventeenth-century Pintadoes*, pp. 3-15.

### PLATE XIV, FIGURE 18

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.

H. 2' 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " W. 3'  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

A white ground in the field ; border, red. The design is in shades of red, brown, blue, violet, yellow and green.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 28.159.2.

### *Description*

The design in the field is composed of groups of human figures interspersed with varied flora and fauna, including goats, peacocks and other birds. Reading from left to right and from top to bottom, the figural groups are as follows : a seated male figure in Persian-style hat fondling a goat, approached by a servant carrying a *surāhi* on a tray ; a servant carrying a vase of flowers ; a courtly figure feeding a bird ; a hunter in Persian dress bearing matchlock ; a regal figure in Persian-style crown, holding out fruit to a ring-necked parakeet, and below him an Indian servant holding a comb duck or *nukhta* in one hand and a smaller bird in the other ; a reclining figure with a ring-necked parakeet perched on his outstretched hand, while a servant massages his feet ; a couple in Indian costume, drinking ; a male figure in Dutch-style hat, holding a large fan ; Indian dancer and musicians performing before a princely figure seated on European-style high-backed chair surrounded by attendants. Surrounding the whole is a broad border filled with scrolling pattern of palmette and leaf motives ; and narrow guard stripes with undulating floral stems. According to Joseph Breck (see below), the reverse side bears an impression in black ink of a circular seal with inscription in Persian characters as follows (transliteration as published) : *bandeh rostam sahab mosallam koo gostard bazm jemshid*.<sup>1</sup> This has been translated : The servant (of God) Rustam the undisputed master who spread the table of Jemshid (i.e. who emulated the

<sup>1</sup> A more satisfactory transliteration would be : *banda rustam sāhib-i musallam kū gustard bazm-i jamshid*.



legendary Persian king in entertaining). There are also two Devanāgarī inscriptions, interpreted as the "names of clerks", and including two decipherable dates : 1101 and 1113, corresponding to A.D. 1689 and 1701.

#### *Comment*

This design includes details strongly reminiscent of Bijapur miniature painting of the period of Ibrahim II (1580-1627). For instance, the dancing scene at bottom centre might have been lifted direct from a Deccani miniature of the period ; and the reclining youth in the centre calls to mind the famous *Siesta* painting in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

The comb ducks or *nukhtas* in the bottom left-hand corner are closely paralleled in the hangings at Pl. II, Fig. 2 and Pl. VI, Fig. 7. The Dutch hat worn by the figure at the bottom left is repeated at Pl. XIII, Fig. 17.

#### *Bibliography*

Joseph Breck, *Four Seventeenth-century Pintadoes*, pp. 3-15.

#### *PLATE XV, FIGURE 19*

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.

H. 2' 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " W. 2' 8".

An off-white ground, the design being in shades of red, green, blue, brown, white, black and purple.

National Museum of India, New Delhi.

#### *Description*

The design is dominated in the centre by a conventional architectural setting within which is seated a courtly figure in Indo-Persian costume (the same figure being repeated in the coverlet at Pl. XII, top centre). In this case the figure is attended by a maidservant with winecup, and flanked by two other figures — one carrying a book, the other a stringed instrument. There are also figural groups in each of the four corners : top left, a princely bearded figure (repeated at bottom right of Pl. XII), seated in the same posture with bird and drinking cup, but in this case talking to a kneeling Chinese figure ; top right, two figures in Indo-Persian costume conversing, one holding a scarf, the other an unidentified object ; bottom left, another pair conversing, one holding a drinking cup ; bottom right, a figure in Persian costume holding a wine jar (repeated in reverse at Pl. XII, top right), and beside him a woman in Indian dress. Above the latter pair is a long-haired Hindu ascetic practising austerities with a pineapple in his hand. Surrounding the whole is a broad border with conventional Persian rosette-and-lozenge ornaments. Framing the border are narrow guard stripes filled with conventional crenellations (repeated at Pl. XII).

<sup>1</sup> Barrett, *Painting of the Deccan*, Pl. 6.



## GOLCONDA COTTON PAINTINGS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

### *Comment*

The repetition of details in this coverlet and the piece at Pl. XII indicate that the two designs were based on a common source (see p. 21).

The Chinese figure at the top left is an unexpected intrusion and probably represents a porcelain-seller. Such figures appear occasionally in contemporary Mughal painting.

### *PLATE XV, FIGURE 20*

Coverlet : painted cotton. Made under Indo-Persian patronage. Golconda, 1640-1650.

H. 1' 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  $\times$  2' 8".

An off-white ground, the design being in shades of red, green, purple, blue, brown, white and black.

National Museum of India, New Delhi.

### *Description*

The field is dominated by a central medallion composed of intertwined human figures surrounding the seated figure of a Hindu ascetic. The remainder of the field is filled with figural groups interspersed with flora and fauna. Top left, a courtly seated figure is receiving a pineapple from a female servant, while behind him stands a male servant with cushion; top right, a figure in Indian costume is seated in a European high-backed chair, while behind him stands a servant carrying a dish, and before him a female figure with fan and a male figure in Persian-style hat (the latter figure is similar in dress and stance to one of the figures at Pl. XII, top left); bottom left, a princely figure in Indo-Persian costume is seated on a mat, attended by a servant with fruit; bottom right, a similar figure drinking, and before him a soldier holding a goat, and another figure in Deccani dress gesticulating. Surrounding the whole is a border with intertwining and undulating floral stems.

### *Comment*

The central medallion of intertwining bodies is a common convention of South Indian art, reminiscent of the animals composed of multiple female bodies which is also an old South Indian convention.

### *PLATE XVI, FIGURE 21*

Fragment of hanging : painted cotton. Golconda, 1640-1650.

H. 3' 2" W. 4' 2".

A white ground, the design being picked out in shades of red, brown, blue and purple.

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I. S. 16-1956.



*Description*

A floral pattern with architectural niches, each framing a human figure, and other figures at the top. The costume details are mostly Mughal, but some of the hats are Persian. The design has been overworked with white embroidery by a European hand, probably in the 18th century.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In preparing this study, I have frequently consulted colleagues on specific problems, and in many cases I have been influenced by their opinions in arriving at my own conclusions. In particular, I am indebted to Mr. W. G. Archer and Mr. Robert Skelton in my own department at the Victoria and Albert Museum ; and Mr. Basil Gray and Mr. Douglas Barrett of the British Museum. On problems of Persian painting and European costume I have received help from Mr. Basil Robinson and Mr. Brian Reade, both of my own museum. For permission to use two unpublished photographs of sections of the Lepakshi murals, I am grateful to my friend Mr. Richard Lannoy. On hearing that I was preparing this study, friends and colleagues in museums all over the world have given me generous help with the supply of photographic materials. In particular, Mr. Nasli Heeramanek, who kindly gave the colour blocks used at Pl. A ; the Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad, who generously provided the silk-screen reproductions used as the frontispiece ; and Miss Hannah McAllister of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mr. George J. Lee of the Brooklyn Museum, New York, and Miss Gira Sarabhai of the Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad, all of whom have had their materials specially photographed according to my needs.



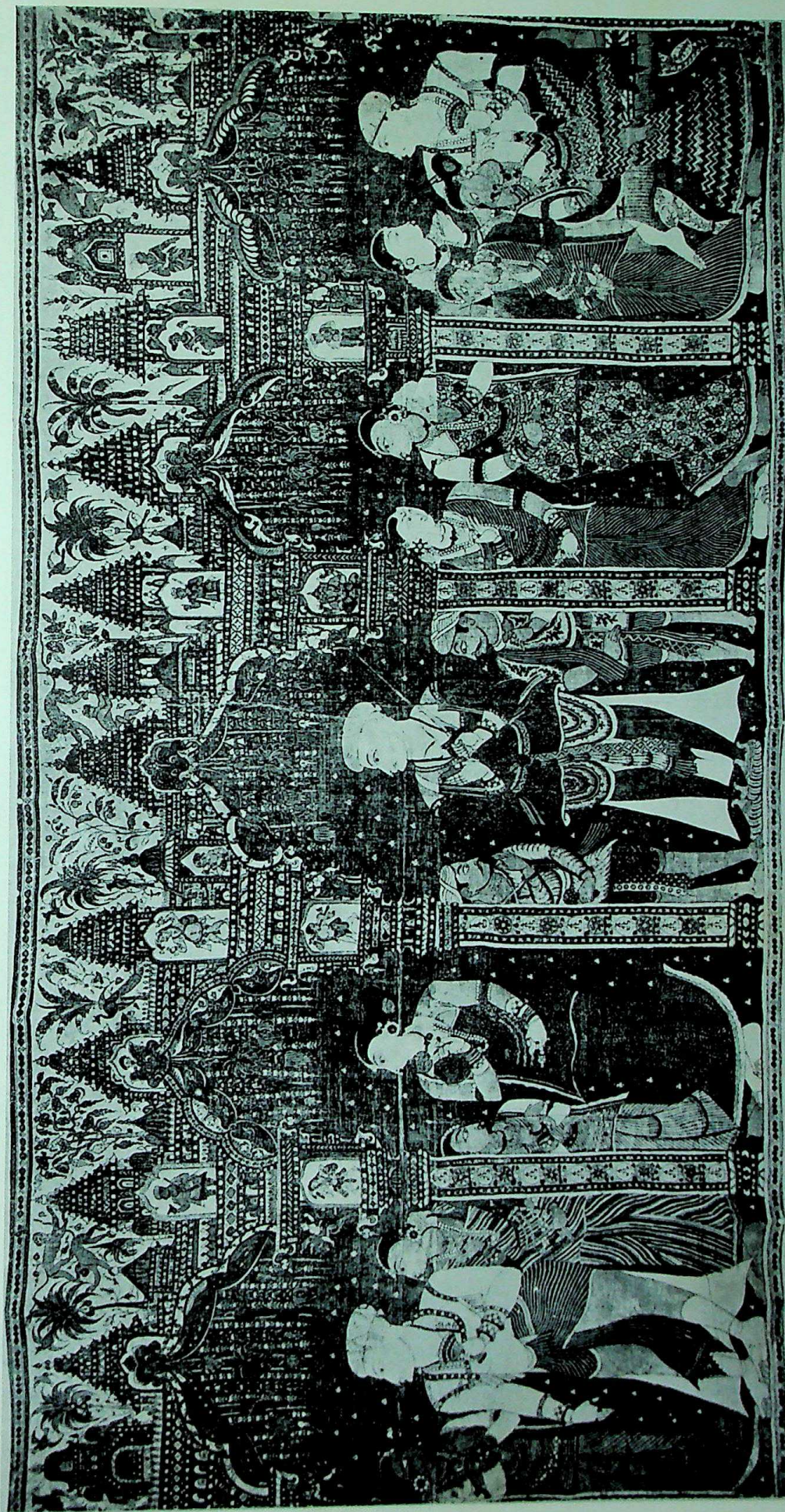


Fig. 1. Wall hanging. Painted cotton. Golconda, Circa 1600. In a Japanese collection.



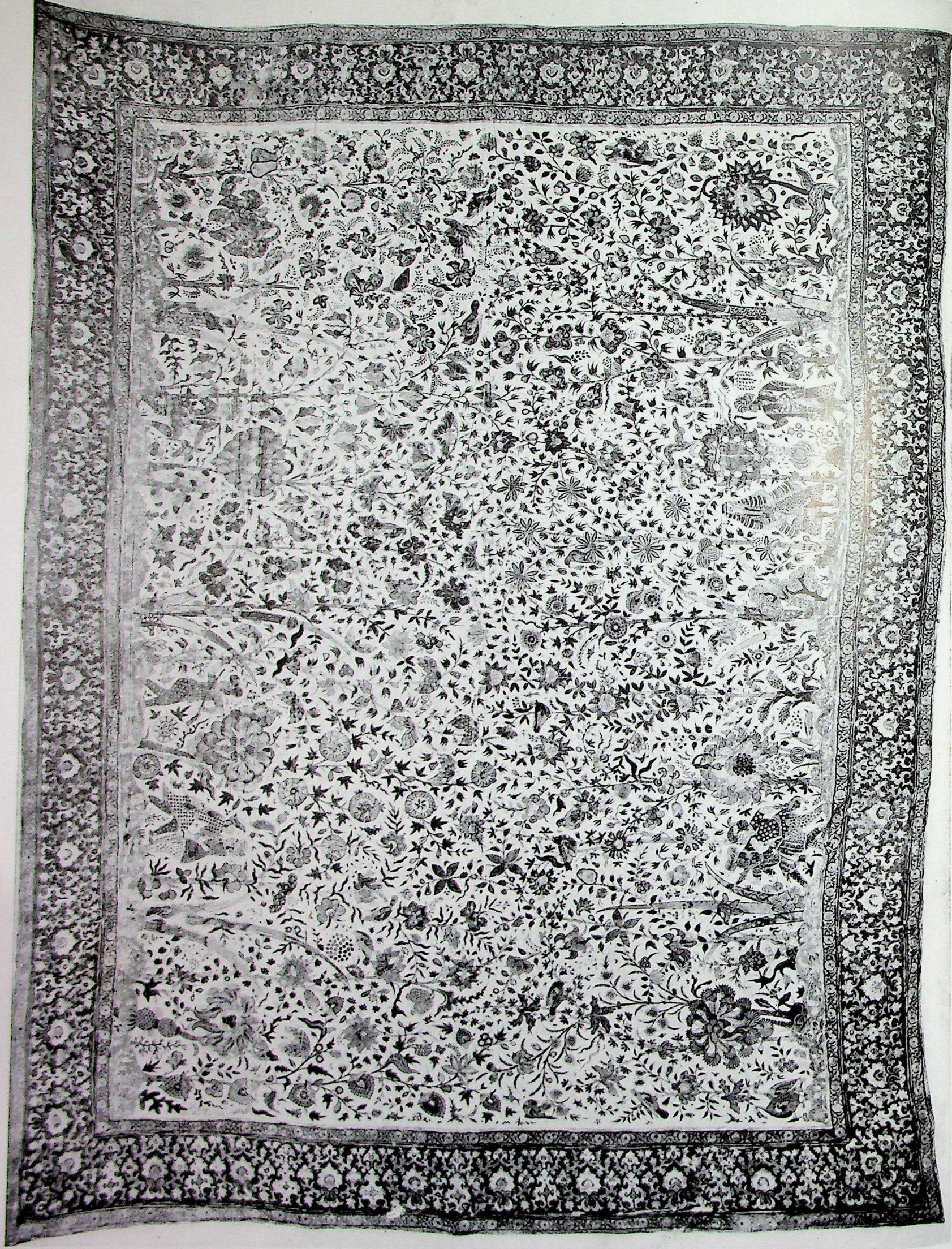


Fig. 2. Coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1625-1635 A.D. 8' 1" x 10' 8". Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



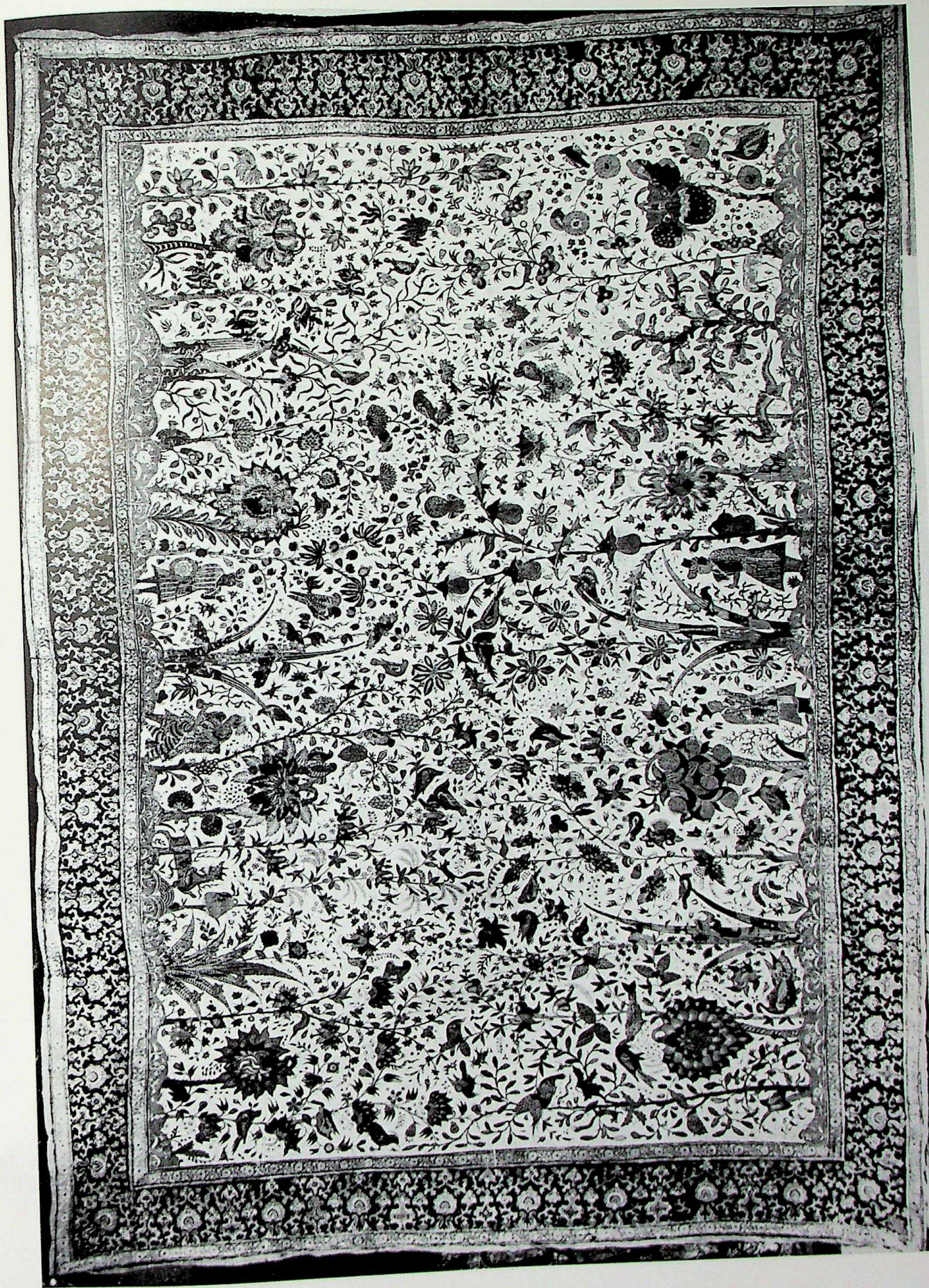


Fig. 3. Coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1625-1635 A.D. 7' 9" x 10' 8". Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad.





Fig. 4. Wall hanging. Painted cotton. Made under Dutch patronage.  
Golconda, 1635-1645 A.D. 7' 2½" × 3' 9".  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



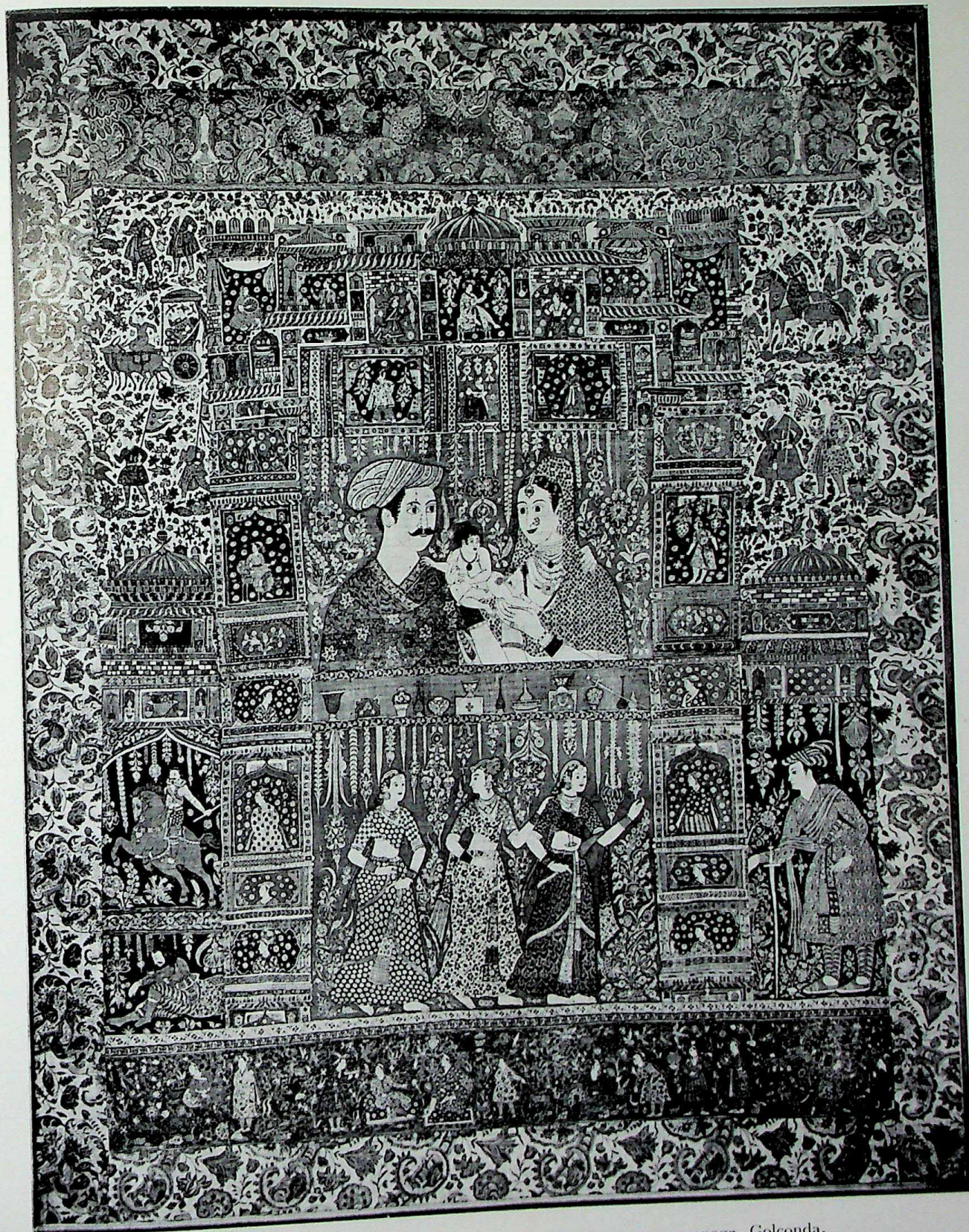


Fig. 5. Wall hanging, Painted cotton. Made under European patronage, Golconda, 1635-1645 A.D. (The floral surround is an 18th century addition). 8' 3½" × 6' 5".  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.





Fig. 6. Sections of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda, 1630-1640 A.D. 8' 3 1/2" x 3' 2".  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.

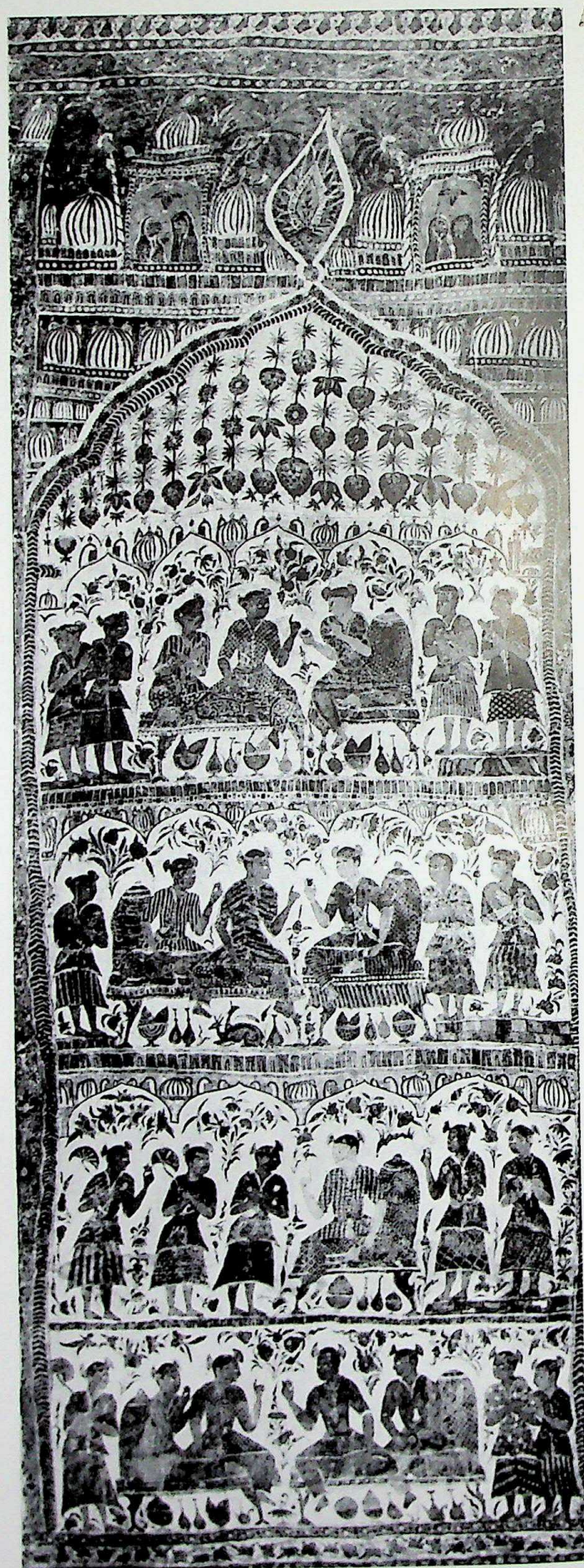


Fig. 7. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda, 1630-1640 A.D. 8' 3 1/2" x 3' 2".  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.



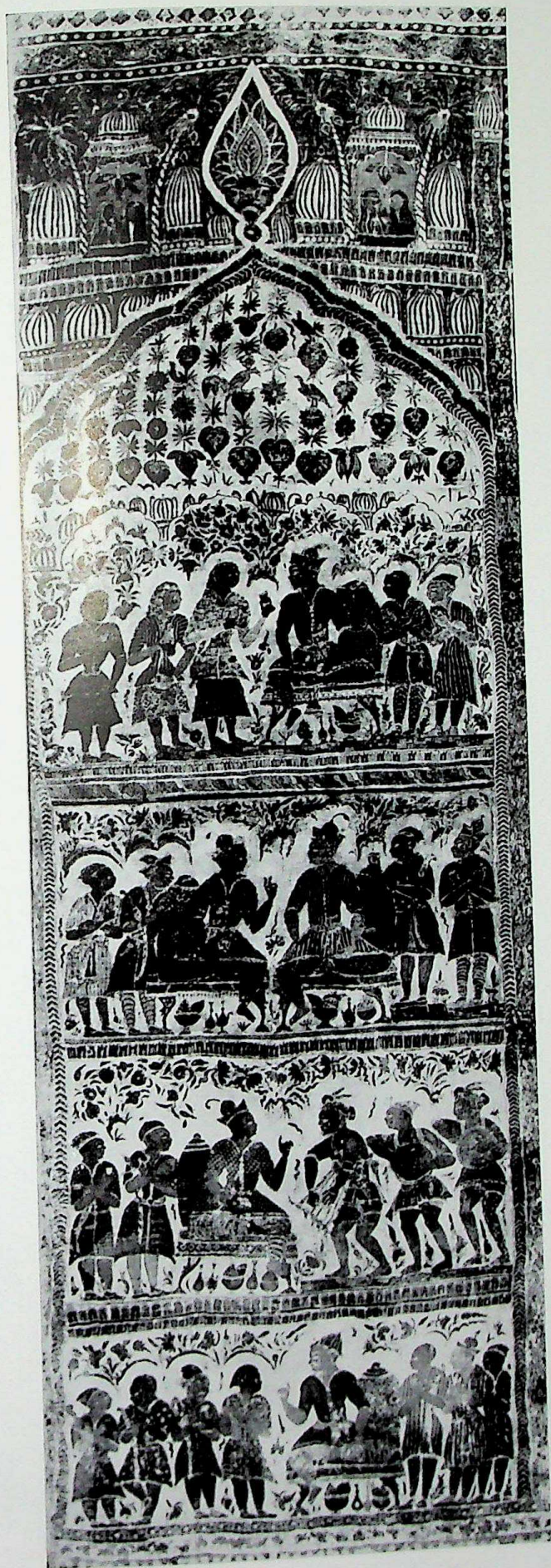


Fig. 8. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D. 8' 3½" × 3' 2".  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.

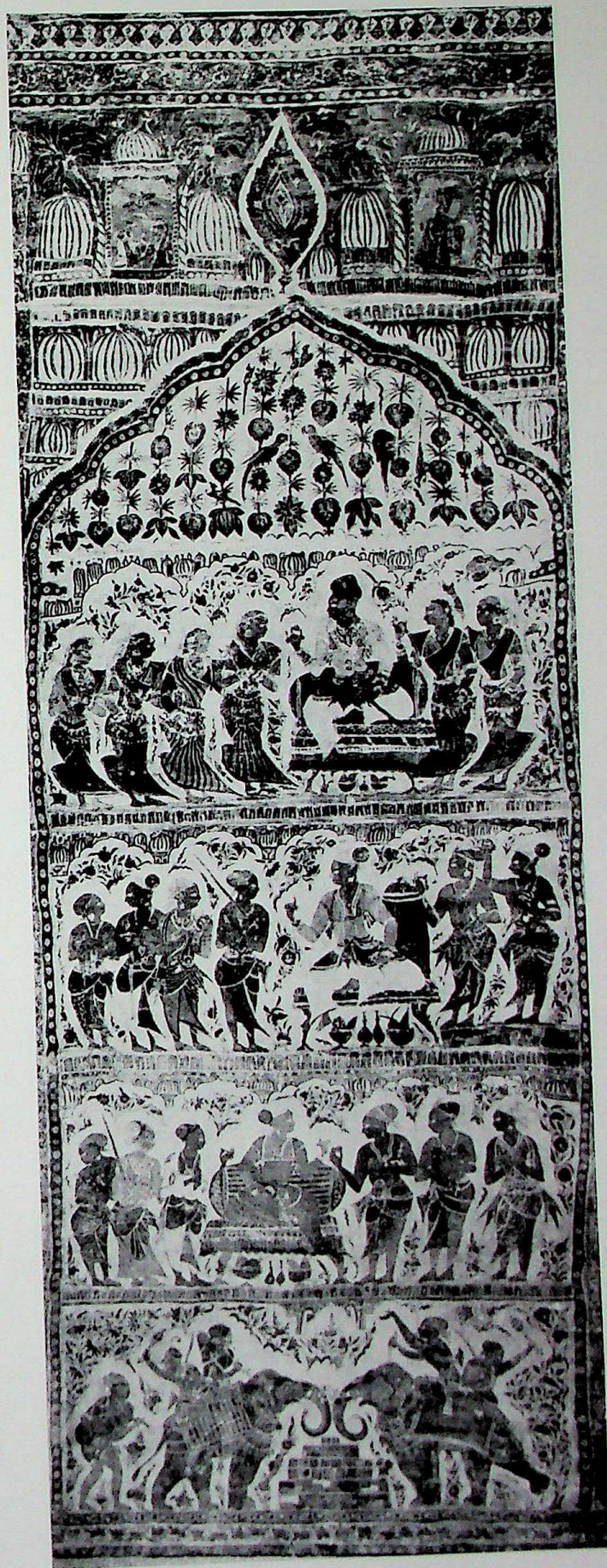


Fig. 9. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D. 8' 3½" × 3' 2".  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.



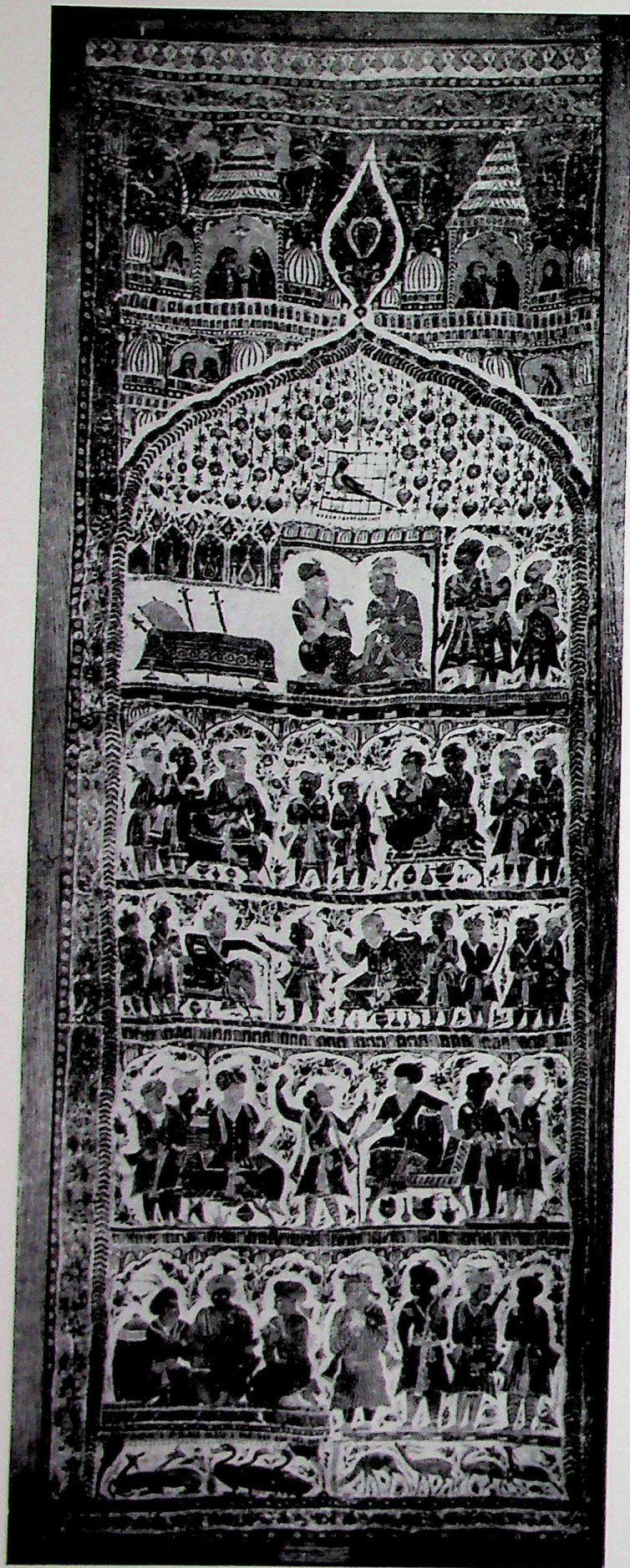


Fig. 10. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D.  $8' 3\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3' 2''$ .  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.

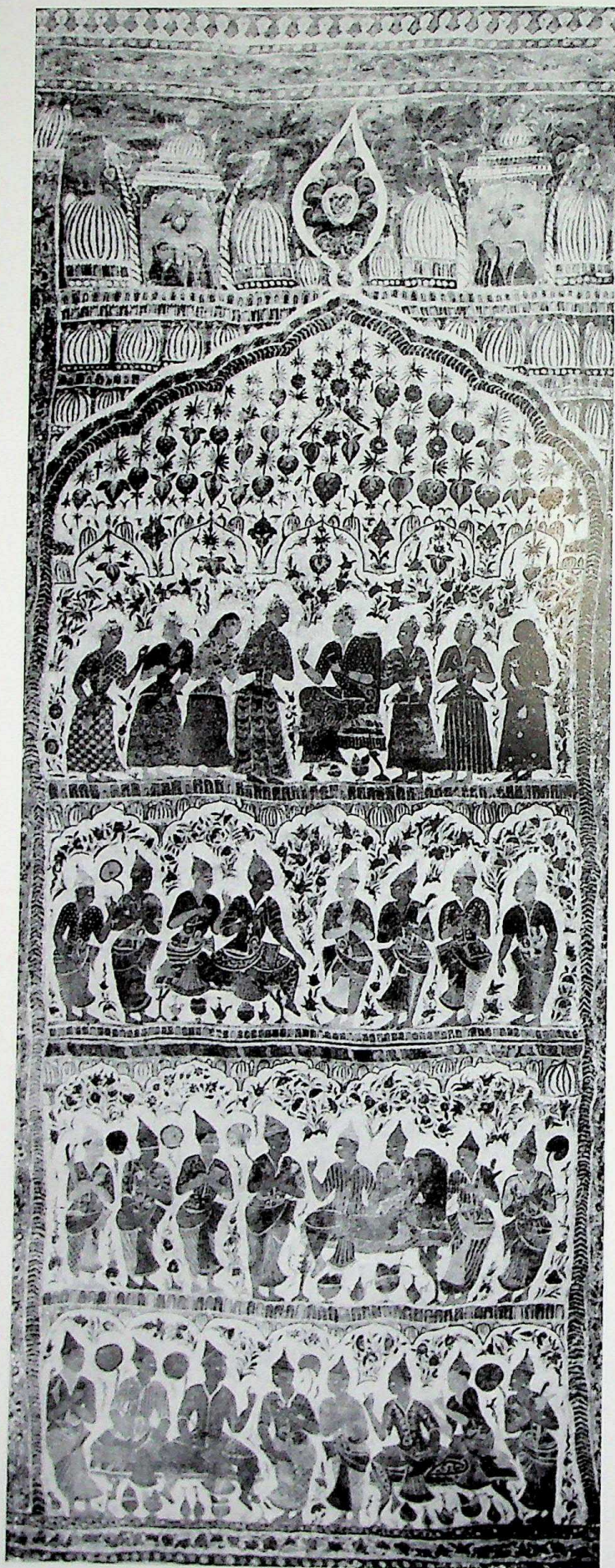


Fig. 11. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D.  $8' 3\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3' 2''$ .  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.





Fig. 12. Section of a hanging. Painted cotton.  
Golconda. 1630-1640 A.D. 8' 3½" × 3' 2".  
Brooklyn Museum, New York.



Fig. 13. Detail from Pl. IX, Fig. 12.



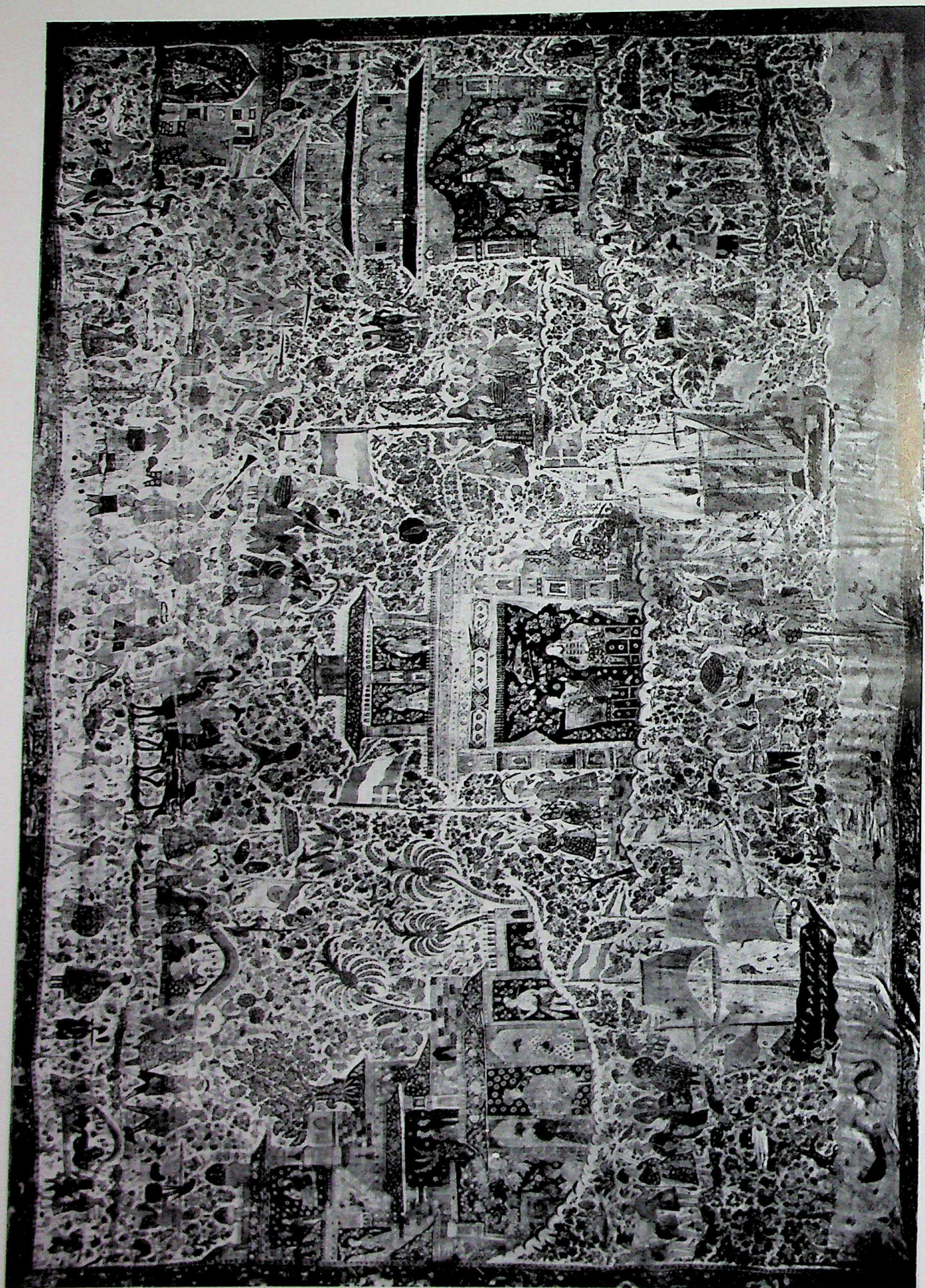


Fig. 14. Coverlet. Painted cotton. Made under Dutch patronage. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D. 9' x 6' 5". Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.



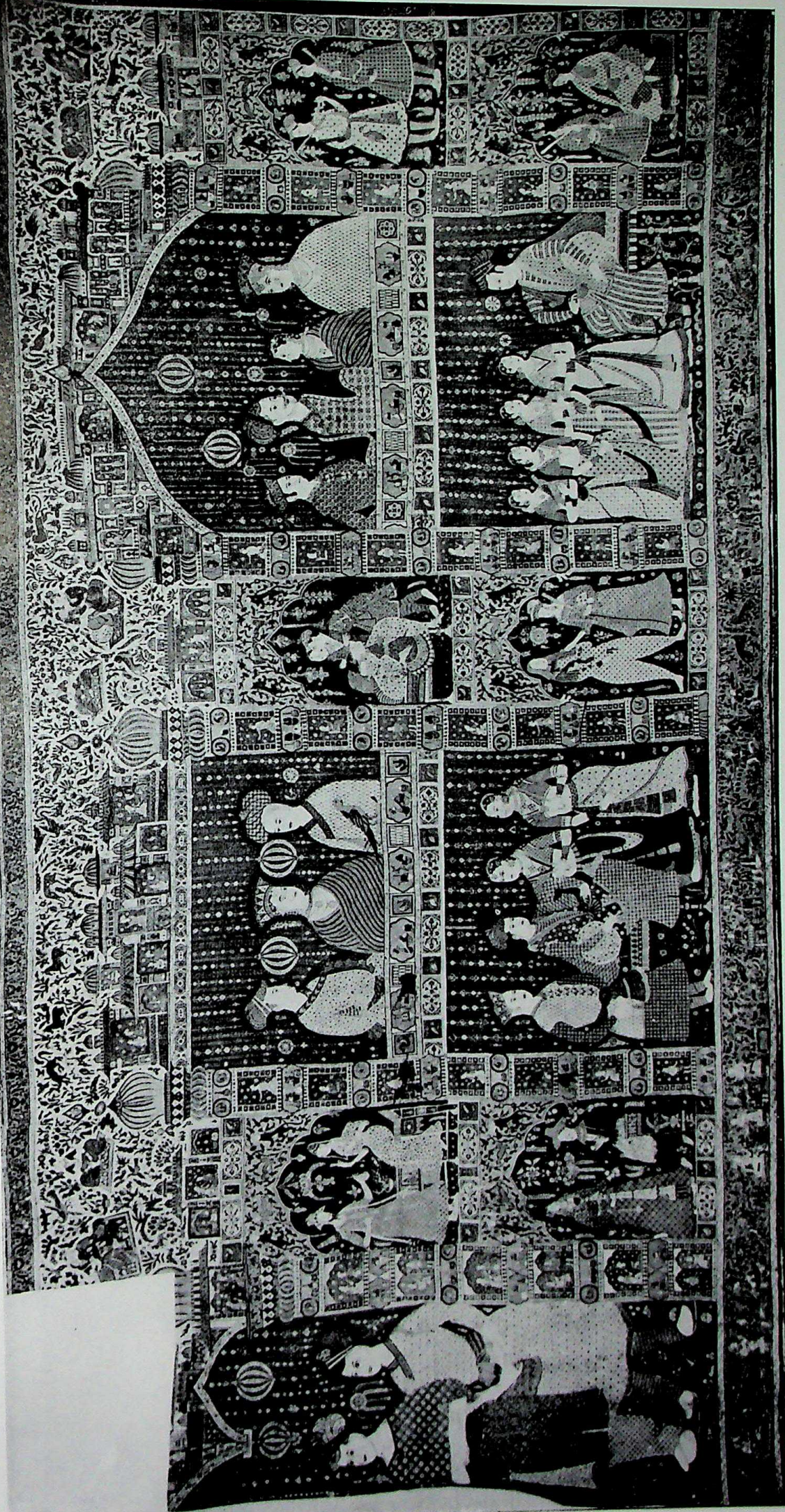


Fig. 15. Wall hanging (incomplete). Painted cotton. Made for the Mughal market. Golconda, 1640-1650 A.D. Approx. 7' x 14'. Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedabad.



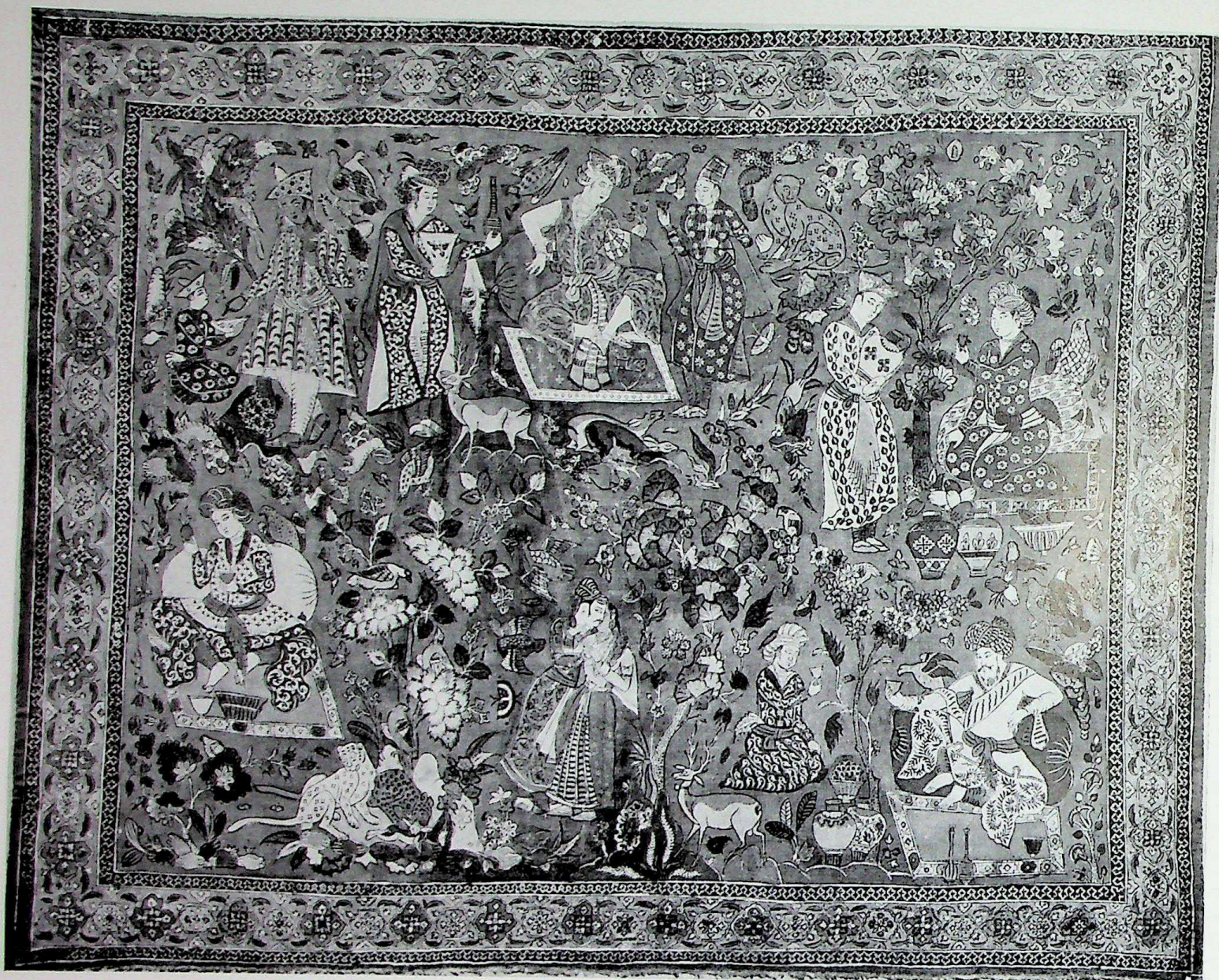


Fig. 16. Miniature coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda, 1640-1650 A.D.  $2' 11\frac{1}{4}" \times 2' 2"$ .  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



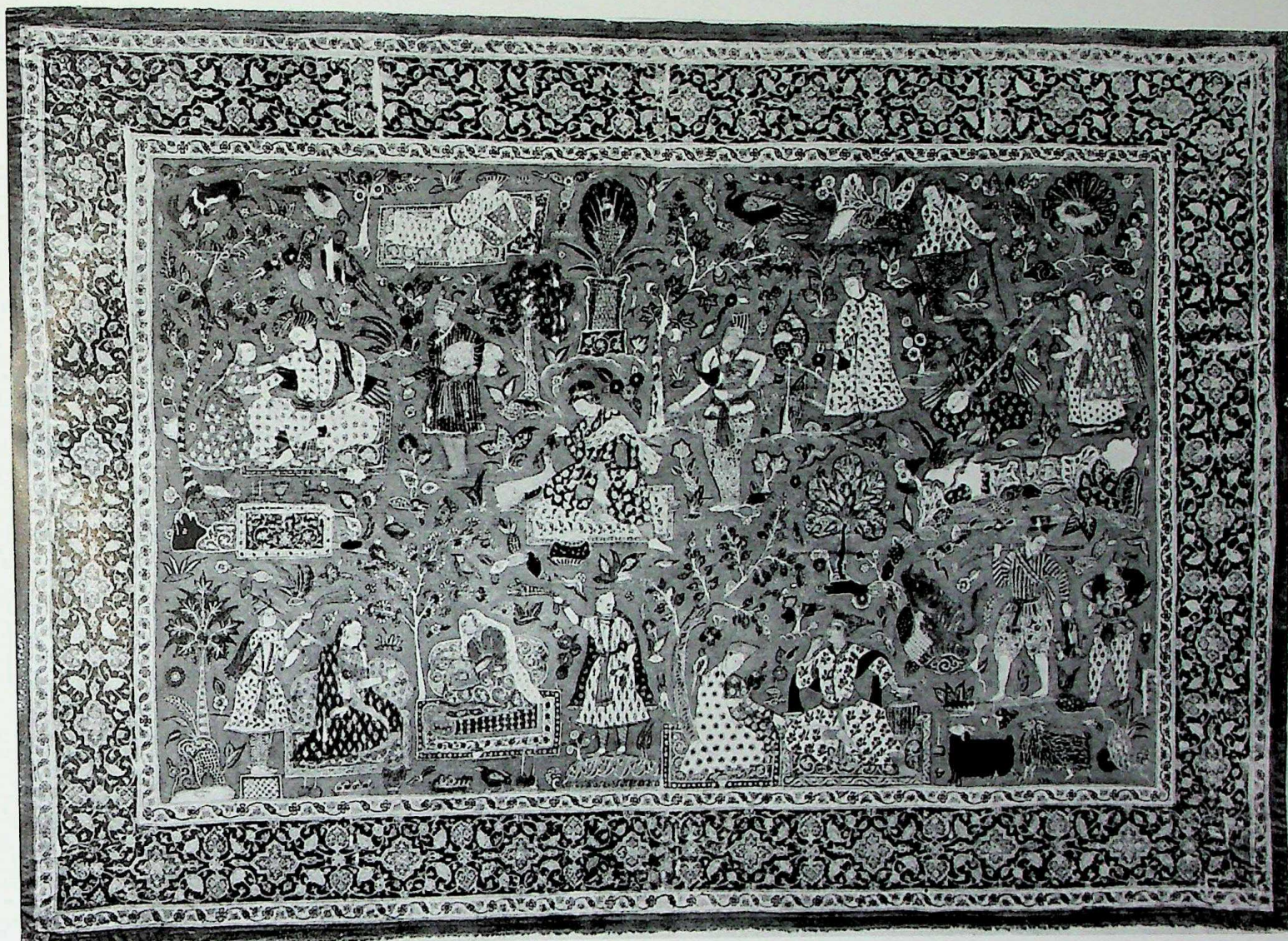


Fig. 17. Miniature coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D. 2' 4" x 3'.  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



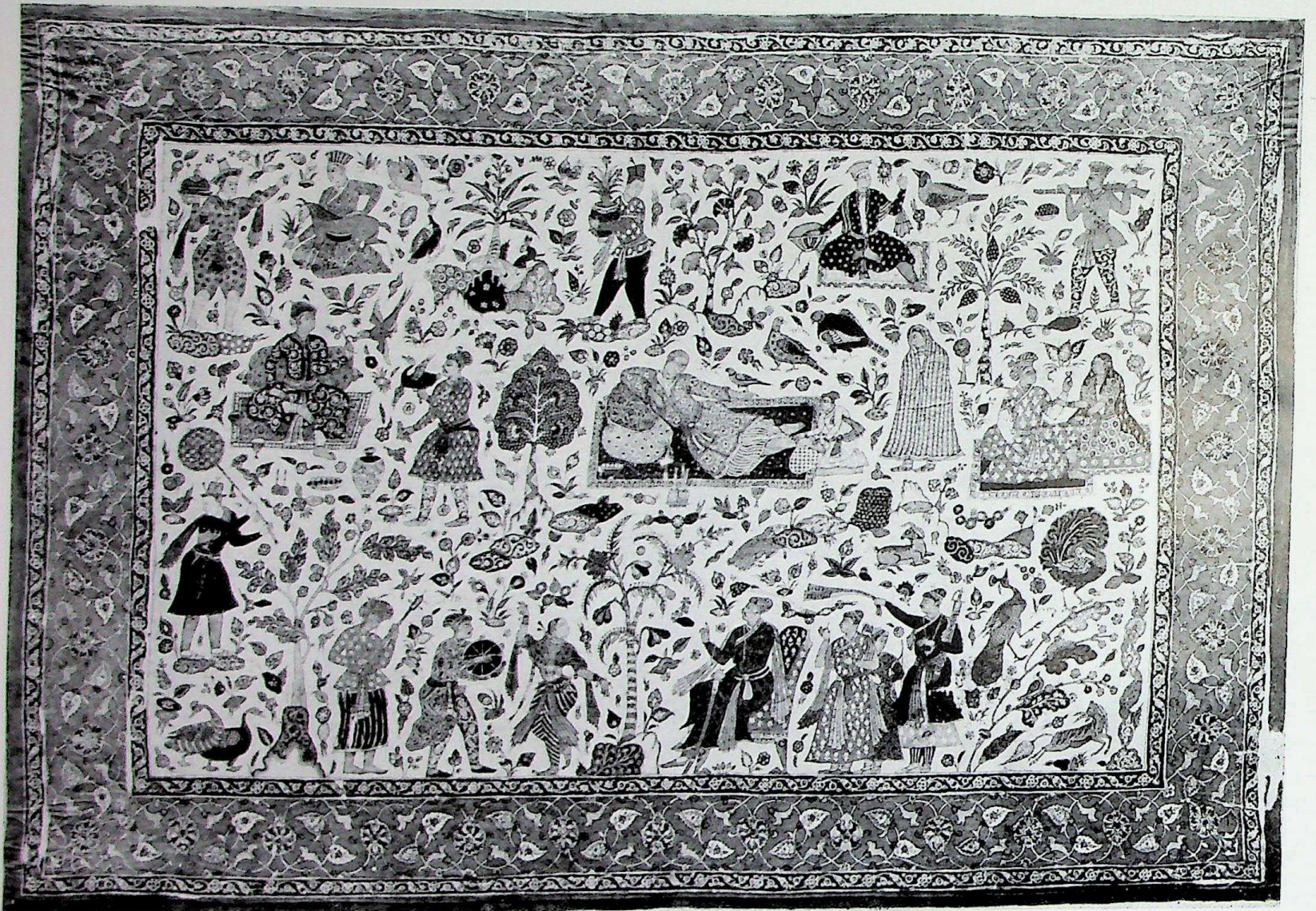


Fig. 18. Miniature coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D. 2' 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$  3'  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.





Fig. 19. Miniature coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D.  
2' 8" x 2' 2 3/4". National Museum of India, New Delhi.



Fig. 20. Miniature coverlet. Painted cotton. Indo-Persian style. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D.  
2' 8" x 1' 11 3/4". National Museum of India, New Delhi.



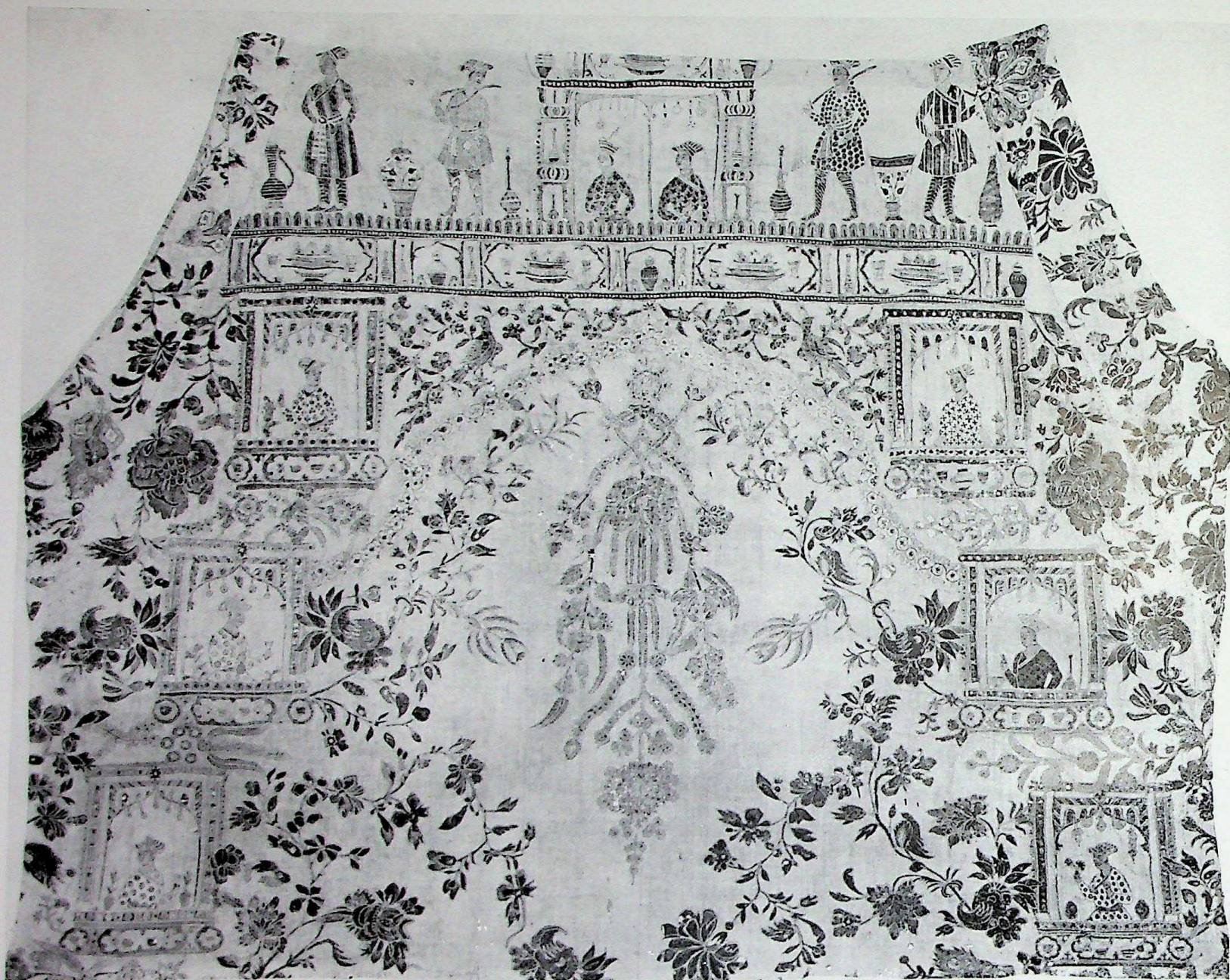


Fig. 21. Fragment of hanging. Painted cotton, partly embroidered. Golconda. 1640-1650 A.D. 3' 2" x 4' 2".  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



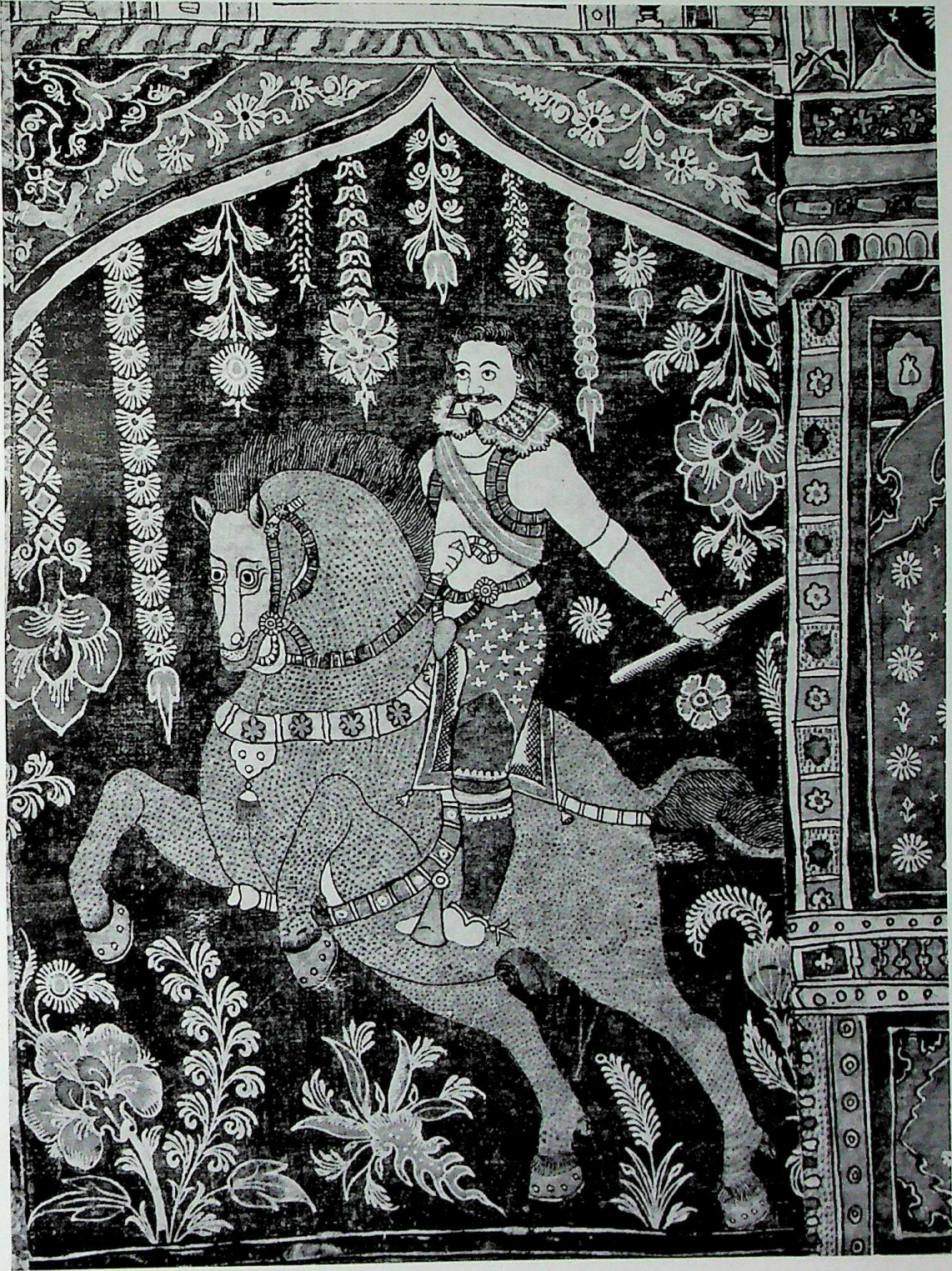


Fig. 22. Detail of Pl. V, Fig. 5.





Fig. 23. Detail of silk brocade. Persian.  
Early 17th century. Victoria and  
Albert Museum, London.

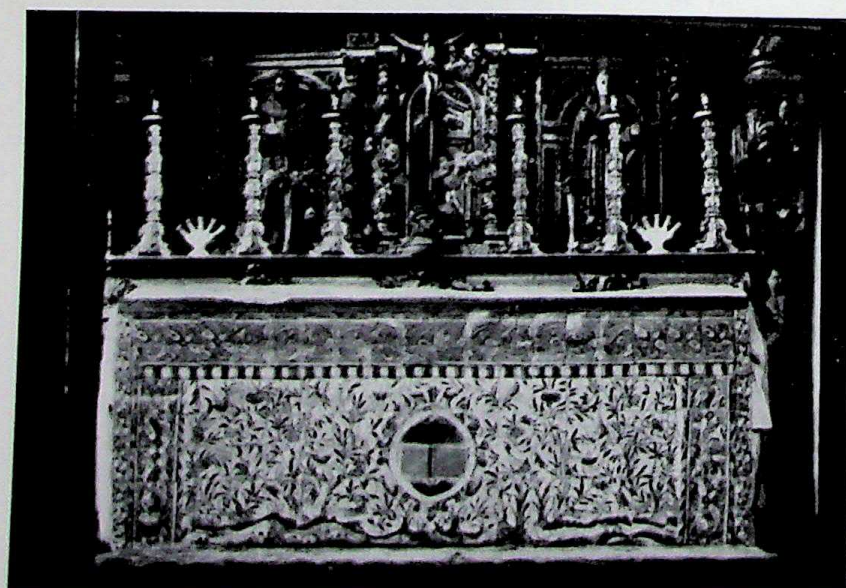


Fig. 24. Altar ornamented with polychrome tiles.  
Church of San Salvador, Evora,  
Portugal. 17th century.





Fig. 25. Japanese copy of a Jesuit engraving. After 1622 A.D.





Fig. 26. Detail of 16th century murals at the Lepakshi Temple, Anantpur District, Madras State.



Fig. 27. Detail of 16th century murals at the Lepakshi Temple, Anantpur District, Madras State.



## WESTERN CHĀLUKYA PAINTINGS AT BADAMI

C. Sivaramamurti

**N**estling within the natural fortification of a whole mountain range, whose flat top creates the illusion of a great constructed lithic wall, the whole region made picturesque by scattered temples and lake, once the shelter of a powerful ruling house that wielded the highest power in the Deccan, is Badami (Bijapur district, Bombay State).

The vicissitudes of time have left their mark on every rock and boulder and monument at Badami. In the heart of Badami, on a boulder, in Pallava characters, is a fragmentary inscription of the Pallava King Narasimhavarman who sacked the capital of the great Chālukya monarch Pulakeśin.

Maṅgaleśa, the brother of the great king Kirtivarman, father of Pulakeśin, and who succeeded his elder born, was a great patron of art and created some of the most magnificent caves and temples in his capital. The loveliest of them all is Cave No. IV, the Vaishṇava Cave, as it is usually called. The most important of the carvings here represent the principal forms of Viṣṇu like Trivikrama, Narasimha, Virāṭ Bhogāsanāsīna, and Varāha. The last one, the Varāha, being also the *lāñchhana* of the Chālukyas, has especially been shown to advantage, as it also suggests how the King had reason to be proud of himself as one shouldering the responsibilities of the vast realm on earth under his sway like Varāha that raised the almost submerged Prithvī.

In an inscription dated Śaka 500, i.e., 578-579 A.D., in the 12th year of his reign, the construction of this cave temple is elaborately described, as also the installation of the image of Viṣṇu in it, with the gift of a village named Lañjīśvara for the proper conduct of the ritual of worship in the temple.

The inscription is very important not only from the point of view of date but also because it contains a precise statement giving a very clear picture of the cave temple excavated by Maṅgaleśa. It clearly states that this is dedicated to Viṣṇu, mentioning Maṅgaleśa as a Bhāgavata. He made the cave temple for that deity exceeding the height of two men, and of wonderful workmanship, extensive in its major and minor parts, ceiling and sides all extremely beautiful to behold :—

*Paramabhāgavato layanamahāvishṇugriham atidvaimānushyakam atyadbhutakarmavirachitam*

*bhūmibhāgopabhāgopariparyantātiśayadarśanīyatamam kṛitvā. (Indian Antiquary, VI, p. 363; X p. 58).*

This inscription near the Varāha panel is full of information and gives a clue that the visitor should look around on the ceiling and walls, as well as at the sculpture, to comprehend the wonderful decoration of the cave by the craftsmen of Maṅgaleśa.

परम भागवतो लयनमहाविष्णुगृहं अतिद्वैमानुष्यके अत्यद्भुतकर्मविरचितं  
भूमिभागोपभागो परिपूर्यतातिशयदर्शनीयतमं कृत्वा.



The Vākāṭakas who were supreme in the Deccan were not quite so long ago rulers of the realm as the predecessors in sovereignty of the Western Chālukyas who carved out their kingdom sometime before Kirtivarman established it on a stronger footing.

The great glory of Maṅgaleśa is clearly given in this inscription where the family tradition of the performance of several sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, Agnichayana, Vājapeya, Pauṇḍarika and Aśvamedha bear out his devotion to the *dharma* aspect of life. His victories in battles, his possession of three powers — *prabhu*, *mantra* and *utsāha* — bear out the *artha* aspect or his worldly success as a true *Kṣatriya*. His personal beauty is compared to the full moon in the firmament of the family of the Chālukyas and points to his success in the sphere of *kāma*; his numerous good qualities and his efficiency, and his mastery of all *śāstras* are all set forth with great gusto. What has not probably been stated is implied in the magnificent decoration of the cave itself. Probably there is a veiled reference to his name Maṅgaleśa as a mansion of *maṅgala*, auspiciousness counted in terms of military success (*chatussāgaraparyantāvanīvijayamaṅgalakāgāraḥ*).

There is probably no monument in India which was not covered with gorgeous colours for sculptures were indeed to be painted and structures likewise. There was no part of a building which was not painted in such a way as to captivate the hearts of an appreciative and aesthetic-minded public. Those who have visited the beautiful monolithic shrines of Mahabalipuram could not have failed to note that in the upper cells of the Dharmarājaratha are fragments of paintings. In several other Pallava cave temples traces of painting have been noted. In structural temples like the Kailāsanātha at Kanchipuram only a few fragments of paintings have remained to show how this art played a great part in beautifying the monument.

Inscriptions at Ajanta clearly point out that the Vākāṭaka kings were responsible for the paintings here. Similarly here at Badami the decorative factor recorded in the inscription shows that the painters of Maṅgaleśa's court were also carrying on the traditions of the earlier Vākāṭakas. The classical idiom in the paintings of Badami clearly bears out this fact of the continuation of these traditions by the Chālukyas of Badami.

The credit of the discovery of these paintings on the heavily vaulted roof of the front *maṇḍapa* goes to Stella Kramrisch.<sup>1</sup> Earlier scholars like Burgess and Banerji had noticed traces of paintings on the more easily visible parts of the cave but not in the places where something more tangible was preserved.

The paintings at Badami are amongst the earliest in Brahmanical temples just as the paintings at Ajanta and at Sittannavasal are Buddhist and Jain respectively.

Maṅgaleśa's great patronage of the painter's art is fully evidenced in the fragmentary paintings discovered at Badami. These paintings were studied first by Stella Kramrisch and she has identified them as scenes from Śiva's marriage. Subsequently, a colour plate has been reproduced

<sup>1</sup> Stella Kramrisch, "Paintings at Bādāmī," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. IV. No. 1, pp. 57-61.















by Karl Khandalavala in his book *Indian Sculpture and Painting*, Bombay 1938. These paintings being fragmentary have not been comprehended satisfactorily.

A large panel,  $5' \times 5\frac{1}{2}'$ , represents a scene in a palace where the central seated figure is witnessing music and dance (Pls. B, XXI, Fig. 1 and XXII, Fig. 2). From the balcony above, there is a group of figures watching the scene.

The principal figure with a soft bluish-green shade of form (Pl. B) is seated with one foot resting on his seat and the other on the *pādapiṭha*, but most of this painting is so obliterated that it is difficult to make out details. The beautiful torso of the figure and the two hands in attractive pose can be clearly made out. The fingers of the right hand are delicately portrayed in *kaṭakāmukha* while those of the left are in the *śikharahasta*; though the face is lost, the top of the *makuṭa* or crown is preserved. Around the neck on which the lines portraying it as *kambukaṇṭha* are present is a necklace with beautiful pendant tassels so usual in Chālukya works as observed in sculpture. The *yajñopavīta* is composed of pearls. The *kuṇḍala* of the left ear is visible though the right one is lost.

At the feet of this important personage are a number of seated figures, mostly damaged. Around this central majestic figure are several damsels either holding the *chāmara* or in general attendance (Pl. XXII, Figs. 2 and 3).

To the left, the orchestra is composed of musicians and two beautiful dancing figures. The male dancer is shown facing the audience and the female with her back turned to it. The former is dancing in the *chatura* pose with his left hand in the *daṇḍahasta* and the right in *kaṭakāmukha* raised somewhat in consonance with his eyes which are directed upwards envisaging something heavenly. The latter, with her legs crossed, is almost in the *prishṭhasvastika* attitude, and as her right hand is in *daṇḍa* and the left in the *kaṭakāmukha*, it is just the position of the former dancer reversed. The male dancer (Pl. XXII, Fig. 4) has his hair dressed up in *jaṭā* fashion and his ears are adorned with *kuṇḍalas* of the *patra* type. He wears the usual ornaments like a necklet, armlets and bracelets and is dressed in the striped *ardhoruka* covering the thighs.

The female dancer is of darker shade — greenish-blue. She wears her hair in an elaborate coiffure, on the ear is the *patrakuṇḍala*, on the arms the *ananta* type of *aṅgadas* and bracelets (Pl. XXI, Fig. 1). The flexion of her body is beautifully portrayed. Seated around the dancer are musicians playing various instruments. All of them are women. There are two flute players, and immediately adjacent to their right and a little in front is a drummer. In front of her is again another woman of swarthy shade who seems to have the *aṅkya* type of *mridaṅga* on her lap. Facing and in front of her is another woman who is playing the cymbals. All the musicians wear the *patra* type of *kuṇḍalas* and the usual ornaments like armlets, bracelets, anklets, etc.

The *chāmaradhārīṇīs* around the principal figure (Pl. XXII, Figs. 2 and 3) hold the flywhisk in a manner so as to rest sometimes on the arm or almost on the shoulder as Bāṇa describes in the context of the















beautiful picture of King Harsha's court in the *Harshacharita*. They are all gracefully posed with their faces calm and serene and eyes centred on the principal seated figure on whom they attend. Except one that has his hair bound up in *jaṭā* fashion and appears to be a male in this group of *chāmaradhārīṇīs*, all the rest are women with hair dressed up in the *dhammilla* mode. In all cases, the *patrakuṇḍala* is shown adorning the ears. The eyes are always half open and look somewhat dreamy except that of the male dancer whose eyes look up.

The scene is laid in a grand mansion, with a pillared hall with the *yavanikā* or screen arranged for indicating the inner apartments of the palace and thereby some kind of privacy (Pl. XXII, Fig. 3 : the screen partly visible behind *chāmaradhārīṇī*). The pillars supporting the galleries above on the first floor are circular in section with bulbous cushion capital on top.

The figures from above watching the scene indicate princely personages wearing the *makuta* or *kirita* usually worn by *devas* and kings.

Judging from all this, it appears to be a scene of Indra in his magnificent palace Vaijayanta witnessing dance and music. The female dancer appears to be one of the heavenly nymphs practising the great art of *nāṭya* in the manner expounded by the sage Bharata or Taṇḍu. Depicted near her is probably either Bharata or Taṇḍu himself showing the high proficiency attained by the dancer by practical demonstration before the Lord of Heaven ; and the *devasabhā* Sudharmā is thereby clearly portrayed in this picture. It may be recalled that Urvaśi committed an error on the occasion of one such *nāṭya* performance before Indra's audience.

In this context, we may understand the next panel, equally large, 5' × 5½', depicting a royal personage seated at ease in the *mahārājajalīlā* pose with his right leg on the *pādapiṭha*, his left leg raised and placed on the seat, and his left arm resting leisurely on his knee, his right hand held in *tripatākā* attitude (Pls. C and XXIII, Fig. 5). This princely figure rests on a cushion placed against the back of his seat. He wears a high topped crown and the usual ornaments. The *yajñōpavīta* flows over his right arm. There are several crowned princes seated on the ground towards his right ; and they are attending on him awaiting to receive his orders, echoing Kālidāsa's verse *nṛpatayaḥ śataśo maruto yathā śatamakham tam akhaṇḍitapauruṣam* (*Raghuvamśa* IX, 13). Towards the farthest end is a woman dressed in a lower garment of the *āprapadīna* type reaching her anklets, and holding in her hand a *vetradaṇḍa* or a staff. It appears to be an usher or the *pratīhārī* (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 6).

To the left of the prince is the queen attended by *prasādhikās* or attendant maids, one of whom is dressing her feet or anointing it with *alaktaka* (Pl. XXIV, Figs. 6 and 7). The queen is seated on a low couch with a rectangular back decorated with a border pattern all around and with cushions against it. Attending on her as also on the prince are *chāmaradhārīṇīs* with their hair dressed up either in the *dhammilla* or in the *jaṭā* fashion. One of these appears to hold a *daṇḍa* rather than a *chāmara*. The queen is seated in a lovely pose, her right leg touching the *pādapiṭha*, her left raised and placed on the seat itself. She is resting her right hand on her seat with her left hand almost



suggesting the *sūchī* mode. The *patrakundalas* droop from her ear lobes. The *ananta* armlets entwine her arms and the necklets and bracelets add charm to her already charming form. Her hair is dressed up beautifully in *dharmilla* fashion and the *chikura* ringlets of hair are visible as they nestle on her forehead. She wears the striped *ardhoruka* covering the thighs. The scene is laid in one of the inner apartments of the palace. The architectural background suggests not only the upper storey but down below near the hall itself at a farther end is seen a door half open beyond the pillars with bulbous cushion-shaped capitals. This picture represents a swarthy prince with his queen of the *gaura* or fair type.

Among the chieftains seated below (Pl. XXIV, Fig. 8), there is one of *gaura* or fair type, one of swarthy shade and another of dark complexion or greenish-blue similar to ones we have already noted in the earlier panel.

This figure probably suggests a king, and his hand in the *tripatāka* indicates two factors. At Nagarjunakonda we know that the soothsayers hold their fingers similarly to suggest two things about the new born child of Suddhodana — one the attainment of the Supreme Knowledge and the other of Universal Sovereignty on earth — either of which the prince had every possibility of attaining. The king has an oval halo around his head as in the case of many Chālukya figures. This indicates only his greatness.

These two paintings seem to be so correlated that one seems to suggest the meaning of the other. Maṅgaleśa who succeeded his great royal brother Kīrtivarman had such a great love and respect for him as seen from the inscription in the cave wherein the entire merit of this great offering is made over by him to this most beloved and respectful object of devotion<sup>1</sup> that it is no wonder that he got his portrait painted as in his private audience chamber seated with his queen and select friendly subordinate rulers.

The portrait of Kīrtivarman in his royal splendour in the vicinity of Indra in all his glory in the Indrasabhā, only suggests the line of Kālidāsa 'na *kriṣṇā-prabhavatyapi vāsava* (*Raghuvamśa* IX, 8) where the great ruler was not a bit less conscious of his own glory than Indra himself of his and could not yield in importance. As in the line of the *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* (II, 16) *āsamsante surayuvatayo baddhavairā hi daityairasyādhiye dhanuṣi vijayam pauruhūte cha vajre* or in that of the *Raghuvamśa* (IX, 12) *śamitapakshabalaś śatakotiṇā śikhariṇām kuṣiṇa purandaraḥ | sa śaravriṣṭimuchā dhanuṣhā dvishām svanavatā navatāmarasānanaḥ ||* the thunderbolt of Indra in heaven and the bow and arrow of the king on earth sustained the two worlds, and we may recall that this wonderful idea inspired the coins of Kshatrapa Nahapāna on the reverse of whose issues we find a thunderbolt and the arrow presented boldly to convey this sense.<sup>2</sup> We may also bring to our mind Kālidāsa's verse 'dudoha gām sa yajñāya sasyāya maghavā divam | sampadvinimayenobhau dadhatur bhuvanadvayam ||

<sup>1</sup> *jyeshthāyāsmadbhātre kīrtivarmāṇe parākrameśvarāya tatpūnyopachayaphalam ādityāgnimahājanasamakṣam udakapūr-  
vam viśrāṇitam āsmadbhātrūśrūṣṭiṇi yat phalam tan mahyam syāditi.* (*Indian Antiquary* VI, p. 363).

<sup>2</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *Numismatic Parallels of Kālidāsa*, p. 1.



(*Raghuvamśa* I, 26) where by the exchange of their gifts and prosperity, they sustained the two worlds, Indra in heaven and king Dilīpa on earth. There could not be a better compliment paid to his beloved brother by Maṅgaleśa than by presenting these two pictures side by side thereby enhancing the prestige of Kīrtivarman in terms far beyond normal praise. In this context the two fingers of the prince suggest the two spheres of his influence and his pose in the *mahārājāḷilā* itself suggests his leisurely appreciation of cultural pursuits as suggested in the dance scene in the other panel. Though definite knowledge of Kīrtivarman's contribution to art is not available through written sources, the inscription of Maṅgaleśa leads us to believe of an earlier glorious preliminary to this artistic culmination in Maṅgaleśa's time in this cave, and probably the apsidal temple at Aihole is of the time of Kīrtivarman. A continuous story of the early Western Chāḷukya carvers is thus clear from the study of these monuments.

It is well known that the Varāha panel at Badami as also that of Trivikrama inspired Narsimhavarman, the conqueror of Vātāpī, to carry these themes to Mahabalipuram to get them executed by his own workmen and to be introduced in his cave temples there.<sup>1</sup> The Varāha panel, whose importance is enhanced by the inscription close to it, became such a favourite of Narsimhavarman that he had it repeated in two caves at Mahabalipuram. This is also a noteworthy factor in identifying the painted scene at Badami as we may recall that it is close to the Varāha panel in Varāha cave Number II at Mahabalipuram that Narsimhavarman got the portraits of his grandfather and father Simhavishṇu and Mahendravarman respectively carved in large panels along with their queens. In accordance with the respectful obligations of father and son, Narsimhavarman has shown his father with his queens standing in one panel and in the other Simhavishṇu seated on his throne with his queens standing beside him.

In this panel here, Maṅgaleśa has shown his brother Kīrtivarman seated on his throne and beside him his queen recalling another appropriate description of Kālidāsa :

*aīndram padam bhumigatopi bhuñkte* (*Raghuvamśa* VI, 27) and *tayor divaspaterāsīdekas simhāsanārdhabhāk / dvītiyāpi sakhī śachyāḥ pārijātāśabhāginī* (*Raghuvamśa* XVII, 7)

with equal stress on both king and queen. If this portrait is not intended for Kīrtivarman, the elder brother of Maṅgaleśa, it can only then represent Pulakeśin I, his own father as well as of Kīrtivarman. The swarthy colour of the king could also suggest in that case a pun on the term *rāga* suggesting the keen interest in victories and battles as also his red bodily colour from the term Raṇarāga the father of Pulakeśin I, who was the very embodiment of his father as we can gather from the Aihole inscription. In that case the seated queen would be Maṅgaleśa's mother. But judging from the inscription, Maṅgaleśa seems to have so dearly loved his brother, and as also the merit of the dedication of the cave was made over to his brother in heaven, this appears to be the portrait of Kīrtivarman rather than of his father.

<sup>1</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *Royal Conquests and Cultural Migrations in South India and the Deccan*, pp. 4-7.





Fig. 1. Indra witnessing music and dance. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*, Badami, Cave IV, Chālukya, 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.





Fig. 2. Women in attendance on Indra. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.



Fig. 3. Woman holding *chāmara*. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.



Fig. 4. Male dancer. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.





Fig. 5. Kirtivarman seated with his queen. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*, Badami, Cave IV, Chālukya, 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.





Fig. 6. Queen attended by her maids. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Cave IV. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.



Fig. 7. Attendants of the queen. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.



Fig. 8. Chieftains seated below Prince Kirtivarman. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *mandapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.



As we may see from inscriptions<sup>1</sup> and literature, the belief is that a departed king goes to heaven to be in the congregation of Indra himself, thus suggesting his glory, and here also in accordance with this, Kīrtivarman, in all his royal glory is shown in the vicinity of Indra in all his brilliant lustre in his Sudharmā Devasabhā.

This portrait composition probably inspired Narsimhavarman to repeat the two panels likewise in the Varāha cave. The idea of portrait representation was very common at the time, as a whole portrait gallery of kings in Western India is preserved in the Kshatrapa, Gupta and Traikūṭaka coins. The portrait of Pulakeśin is also believed to have been delineated amongst the late paintings from Ajanta. The portrait of Mahendravarman and his queens at Sittannavasal is very well known. This was an era of portraits and it is no wonder that Maṅgaleśa out of his affection for his royal elder brother whom he succeeded in power, portrayed him in the most suggestive manner comparing him in his might and glory to Indra himself. It is most unfortunate that this painting is very much damaged, especially in the upper part.

Instances of portraits of royal builders are not uncommon ; on the other hand they abound. In the Hoysaḷa temple at Belur, executed in the late Western Chālukya style, Viṣṇuvardhana, the Hoysaḷa king, with his queen Śāntalā in his royal court is portrayed beautifully on one of the screens in stone on the outer side of the structure as one enters. Similarly in the Bṛhadiśvara temple at Tanjore, the portrait of Rājārāja adoring his deity Śiva is delineated in colours delicately painted with the brush and still retained in sufficiently visible form in spite of its being covered for three centuries by a top layer of the Nāyak period. At Konarak there are several panels illustrating the royal builder of the temple Narasimha of the Eastern Gaṅga dynasty in the 13th century as a patron of letters, as a devotee with catholicity of thought and consideration for every faith, as a great wielder of the bow, as in his court receiving embassies or in the inner apartments of his harem amongst his women folk. At Lepakshi, the builder of the temple who beautified it, the chieftain Virupaṇṇa, has his portrait along with that of his brother painted in colours on the ceiling of the *nāṭyamaṇḍapa*, which is one of the most beautiful constructions of its kind of the Vijayanagara period.<sup>2</sup>

In this context, and in the place where it is situated exactly facing the central shrine towards the farthest end, this portrait of the king Kīrtivarman is most appropriate, as the royal devotee would love to be associated with the temple of Viṣṇu in eternal adoration long after his physical frame was consumed by the flames of the funeral pyre. As a worthy scion of this family of

<sup>1</sup> *avanimavanatārīr yaschakāratmasamsthām pītari surasakhitvam prāptavyāmasaktyā*. (Fleet, "Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings," *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III. and *tasmin sureśvaravibhūtiḡatābhilāshe rājābhavat-tadanujah kila maṅgaleśah* (F. Kielhorn, "Aihole Inscription of Pulikesin II," *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VI, Pt. I, p. 1 ff.)

<sup>2</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, "Vijayanagara Paintings from Temple at Lepakshi," *Vijayanagara Sixcentenary Commemoration Volume*, pp. 75-85.  
"Paintings from Lepakshi," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, V, p. 185.



the Bhāgavatas that the Western Chālukyas were, their patron deity was Viṣṇu to whom this great cave with all its beautiful decoration was dedicated.

There are two other fragments of painting also noticed in the Badami cave representing flying pairs of Vidyādhara. One of them shows Vidyādhara with his mate (Pl. XXV, Fig. 9), their hands closely entwining each other's neck in *kaṇṭhaśleṣha*. The Vidyādhara wears a crown, *patrakuṇḍalas* and *muktāyajñopavīta*. The Vidyādhari has her hair dressed up in *dharmilla* fashion. While she is swarthy in colour, her mate is very fair. They are conversing happily as they sail amidst the clouds soaring up high in the air.

The other pair is even more beautiful though less preserved (Pl. XXV, Fig. 10). The Vidyādhari lacks the *kuṇḍalas* on the ears though her lord wears them. The hair of the Vidyādhara is bound up in *jaṭā* fashion with lotus flowers on them. His consort is playing the *viṇā*. In the case of this pair, the masculine figure is dark greenish-blue while the damsel is fair, recalling Kālidāsa's apt picture of the fair and dark in *mithuna*,

*indīvaraśyāmatanur nṛīposau tvam rochanāgaurāśarīrayaśṭīḥ /*  
*anyonyaśobhā parivṛiddhye vām yogastadittoyadayorivāstu //*

(Raghuvamśa VI, 65)

Her fingers thrum the strings as the gourd of the long *viṇā* rests on her chest.

*Editors' Note*

The paintings at Badami were copied by the well-known artist Sri J. N. Ahivasi and his assistants for the Lalit Kalā Akademi. The work was under the supervision of Sri Karl Khandalavala and Sri K. Hebbar. These copies are the most accurate copies of the Badami paintings yet made and are at present on loan to the National Museum of India, New Delhi. The work was undertaken by the Akademi to ensure faithful record of remains on the site as it is feared that further deterioration is likely to take place in the years to come.





Fig. 9. Flying Vidyādhara. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *maṇḍapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. 1' 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 1' 10". Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.

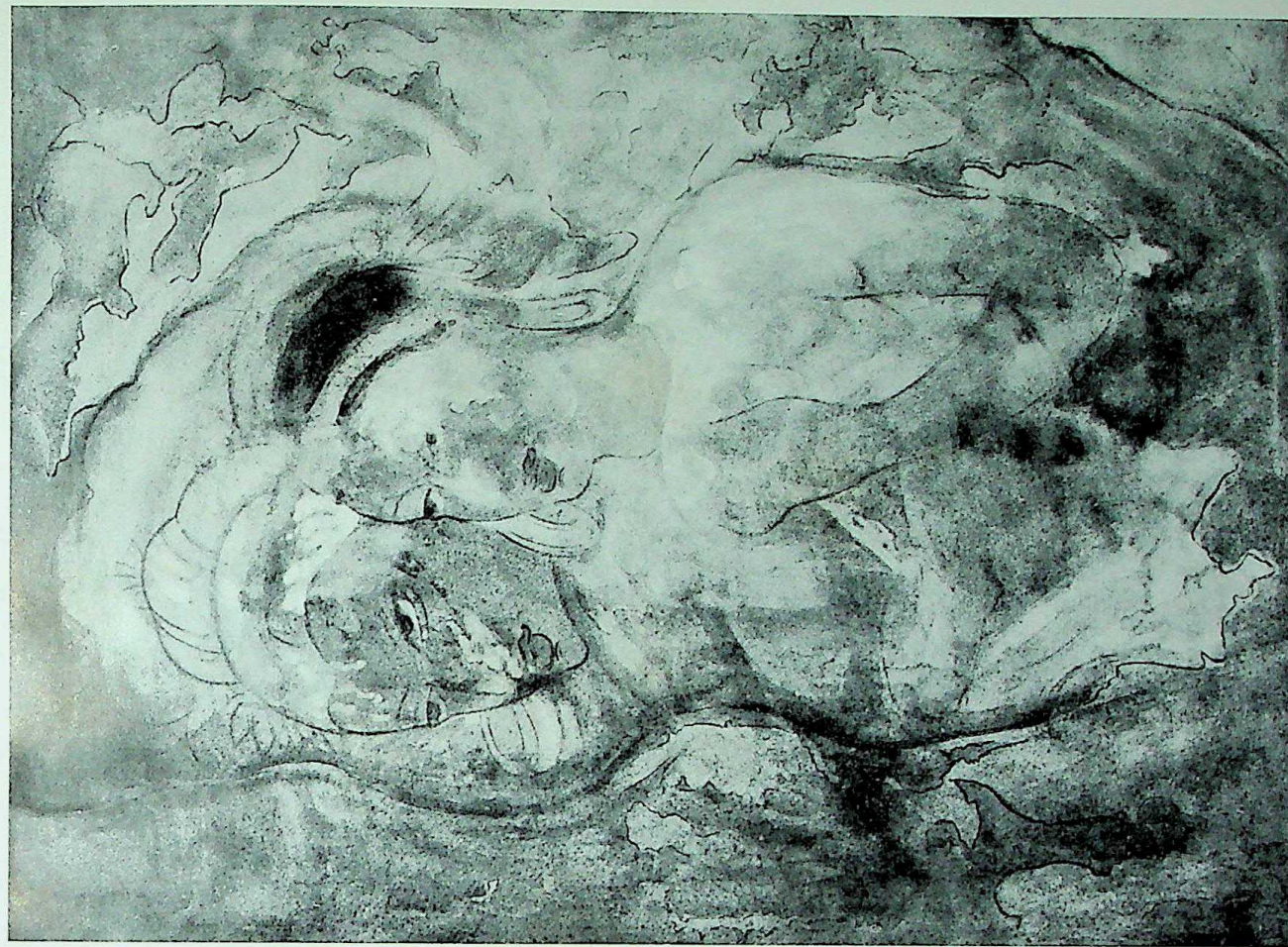


Fig. 10. Flying Vidyādhara. Detail of fresco paintings on roof of front *maṇḍapa*. Badami. Cave IV. Chālukya. 578-579 A.D. 1' 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 1' 10". Copy by Sri J. N. Ahivasi and assistants.





Fig. 1. Natesa. Now in Śiva Temple, Sivapuram. Early half of the 10th century A.D.



## RARE SCULPTURES OF THE EARLY CHOĻA PERIOD

P. R. Srinivasan

### TEMPLES AT KANDIYUR

THE village of Kandiur is at a distance of about five miles to the north of Tanjore on the Tanjore-Tiruvaiyaru road. It is one of the eight *Virattāna kshetras* and also one of the group of seven *kshetras* called Saptasthānas. Moreover it is a place of some importance to Vaishnavas. Here are three ancient temples and some interesting sculptures which are important iconographically as well as from the point of view of art and culture.

The most important temple at Kandiur is consecrated to Śiva as Virattāneśvara. The *gopura* over the main entrance has two large *dvārapālakas* in the early ChoĻa style on its outside, not later than 1100 A.D. The central shrine of the temple is of great interest for its architecture and decorative details. On its walls are inscriptions in Tamil language and script, the earliest of which dates from the 21st year of Ko-Vijaya-Nripatungavikramavarman,<sup>1</sup> a late Pallava king who was contemporary of ChoĻa Āditya I. As the inscriptions do not refer to the construction of the temple, there seems to be no doubt that it existed prior to his time. But whether it was built during the time of Āditya I, who is said to have studded the banks of the Kaveri with the temples of Śiva, or of Vijayālaya or of some other king or chief earlier than Vijayālaya, there is no means of knowing except from the style of the architecture.

It has a square *garbhagriha* preceded by an *ardhmaṇḍapa*. The latter is flat-roofed, the interior of the roof being divided into three parts, by means of cross beams. Each of the parts bears, interestingly enough, a continuous series of *hamsas* (swans) along its projecting ends, which is a unique feature. We shall refer to its significance later. Each of the other three sides of the sanctum has a deep projecting niche. Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Liṅgodbhava and Durgā images are found in niches of the south, the east and the north walls respectively. The pilasters are rounded or fluted, having large *palagais* and corbels cut at an angle of less than 45°. The heavy cornice has a pair of simple *kūḍus* at intervals and a series of *gaṇas* in various jolly postures such as playing on musical instruments and dancing, lining its inner side. Above the cornice is the *yālī* series. Then rises the superstructure which is of stone, but plastered over. It has a single storey with a *koshṭha* on each corner, and a *śālā* in the middle of each side, they being almost free standing. Above there is the *tala* with a *nandī* in four corners. A high cylindrical *grīva* rises above it, topped by a bulbous *śikhara* which bears a *kalāśa*. On the four sides of the *grīva* are four niche-like places containing images like Śiva and surmounted by an ornate *sinhamukha*. It will be clear that it is

<sup>1</sup> Madras Epigraphy Reports, No. 17 of 1895.



a good example of an *ekatalaprāsāda* temple. Just as in the case of the Koranganātha temple at Srinivasanallur and the Nāgeśvara temple at Kumbhakonam, here too there was a pit, two to three feet deep, around the shrine, which has now been unfortunately filled up with cement. Though this last feature is common to these temples, the other details enumerated above indicate an earlier stage of development than that seen in the others, especially Nāgeśvara. On the other hand, our temple seems to be a little more evolved than the Vijayālayacholeśvara temple at Melamalai, Pudukkottai, which is said to belong to the time of Vijayālaya. But in all probability, the Kandiur temple was built during that king's last years or was one of the earliest to be built by his son Āditya I.

There is also a later temple in the second *prākāra*, dedicated to the goddess Pārvatī as Mangaḷāmbikā. It was originally intended to be another temple to Śiva for, as is now well-known, it was only at a much later period that separate shrines to the goddess came to be built and that too by the side of the main shrine itself.

Amongst the sculptures found in the main temple are a few large images either in the round or in very deep relief, as well as a series of small panels in bas-relief carved on the portions below the base of the pilasters of the walls. Similar panels are also found in such other early temples as the Nāgeśvara at Kumbhakonam and the temples at Lalgudi and Punjai and in the temple at Tribhuvanam belonging to later Chōla times.

As we have mentioned above, in temples such as the Nāgeśvara of Kumbhakonam there is a pit round the sanctum showing its plinth further deep down, where is also another series of bas-relief panels. In the central shrine of the Kandiur Śiva temple only the upper series of panels is seen, the bottom one having been hidden permanently from view when the pit was filled up. Except in a few temples of later times such as the Tribhuvanam, the occurrence of this feature is almost limited to those temples which seem to have been erected during the time of Āditya I or during the earlier part of the reign of Parāntaka I, because these panels as a rule are absent from the temples built thereafter. This is conspicuously the case at the great temples at Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram built respectively by Rājārāja I and his son Rājendra I. The reason for the discontinuance of this practice during the period of these kings is not known. But the re-occurrence of these small bas-relief panels in such solitary examples as the Tribhuvanam temple is due not only to the fact that this architectural tradition lingered on for a long time but also to other causes. It is known that the subject matter of these panels relates to stories and scenes taken not only from the *Devī Bhāgavata*, and the *Śiva Purāṇa* but also from the *Bhāgavata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It is also known that from the earliest historical times till about the 10th century A.D. there was amity and accord between the followers of various sects of Hinduism. Somewhere in the 10th century, however, strong sectarian feelings and complexes, especially between the followers of Vaishnavism and Śaivism, seem to have prevailed. This is evidenced by the canonisation of Nāyanmārs and Ālvārs and by the uncommon interest evinced by the leading men



of these sects to collect and compile the hymns and songs by their saints. These, they ranked next in importance only to the Vedas. They were in fixed groups, called the *Tirumuṛāis* and the *Prabandhas*, and they remained in that form without alterations or modifications and possessed the sanctity of scripture, and as such were employed in temple rituals. There is evidence to show that kings of the ChoĻa dynasty took a leading part in these activities. Probably the reign of Parāntaka I witnessed the beginnings of the sectarian feuds. The very name of the king rhyming beautifully with such names of Śiva as Tirupurāntaka, Yamāntaka and Kāmāntaka savours of his strong leanings towards Śaivism. That he arranged for the roofing of the Naṭeśa shrine at Chidambaram with gilt tiles significantly testifies to his zest and fervour and the patronage he gave to the sect he favoured.

Probably as a result of this new turn of events, the Śiva temples built during this period were not embellished with bas-relief sculptures showing scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bhāgavata*; and instead of the small panels depicting the sports of Śiva and Devī, large representations in very high relief of Śiva as Naṭeśa, Kālāri and Bhikshāṭana and of Durgā as Mahishāsūramardinī were made and prominently displayed on the walls of the temples. An interesting example of a temple, due to the inspiration of this new spirit, is perhaps the Vasishṭheśvara temple of Karuntattangudi. The occurrence in this temple of the figures of the saints Appar and Sambandar seems to lend support to this theory, because though these two saints, along with the rest of the sixty-three saints of Śaivism were known since long, no one had previously conceived the idea of representing them on temple walls.

#### *BAS-RELIEF SCULPTURES IN THE ŚIVA TEMPLE, KANDIYUR*

These panels are coated with thick whitewash. On cleaning them it was found that some of them were much worn, and would not photograph satisfactorily. But they richly deserve to be sketched because of their rare artistic excellence and iconographic interest. There are three series of sculptures. One of them deals with Śaivite themes such as Naṭeśa. The second series deals with some of the most important scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* such as the representation by the *Devas* of their grievances to Brahmā, the distribution of *pāyasa* by Daśaratha amongst his queens and the marriage of Rāma and Sītā. The third series deals with stories from Kṛishṇa's life. Probably some of the stories from the *Devī Bhāgavata* formed the subject of a few of the panels that are hidden from view.

#### *SOME ŚAIVITE PANELS IN THE ŚIVA TEMPLE, KANDIYUR*

*Naṭeśa* (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 2). It is found on the northern wall of the sanctum. Though a small panel about 10" × 6" and much worn, it is one of the finest pieces of sculpture of its kind. Here Śiva performs the *catura tāṇḍava*, not in the mild manner of the famous Badami Naṭeśa or the beautiful bronze Naṭeśa from Tiruvarangulam,<sup>1</sup> but in a vigorous and powerful manner

<sup>1</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *The Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, Pl. LXVI, Figs. 1 and 2.



characteristic of early Choḷa sculpture. It is almost a copy of the Pattadakal Naṭeśa. The *jaṭās* of Naṭeśa are outlined behind the head in the beautiful *tarāṅga* (wave) form. The upper right hand probably holds a drum, the lower right hand is stretched and holds a serpent with raised hood, while the lower left hand is in the *kari-hasta* pose with the palm facing us. The waistbands are shown with loops hanging between the legs. Naṭeśa is accompanied by two other figures carved one below the other, to his right. The upper figure is indistinct but it is clear enough that he is playing on a pair of big cymbals (Brahma-tāḷa). According to the story of the dance of Śiva, Brahmā played the cymbals, but whether the figure is that of Brahmā cannot be made out. Below this cymbal player is another seated figure obviously engaged in playing on a pot-drum (*ghaṭa*) which has only one striking surface. His right hand is lifted up and the left hand is on the face of the drum. Representations of the *ghaṭa-vādyā* with single face seem to have been common in early periods as in the Naṭeśas from Aihole and Pattadakal. This earlier tradition is seen continued in a late Naṭeśa figure from Chengannur in the former Travancore State.<sup>1</sup> But the single-faced pot drum is gradually replaced first by a three-faced one as in the case of Karuntattangudi Naṭeśa and then by a five-faced one as occurs on the stone *ratha*-like structure in front of the Kahakasabhā at Chidambaram.

A word as regards the evolution of the form of Naṭeśa becomes necessary here. Up to about the time of Parāntaka, no Naṭeśa in the *ānanda tāṇḍava* form seems to have been fashioned. I have discussed elsewhere<sup>2</sup> when and where approximately the first *ānanda tāṇḍava* Naṭeśa image was made. The Naṭeśa from Kandiur (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 2) being in a form which was known in the period prior to Parāntaka I gives us additional proof that the temple is definitely earlier than Parāntaka's time. It may here be mentioned in passing that although newer forms of Naṭeśa images were evolved in subsequent periods, the attraction and charm of the earlier works were such that later period artists sought to copy them. A remarkable instance of this may be found in the Big Temple at Tanjore where on its cornice, in the northwest corner above the western wall, an exact copy of the Naṭeśa of Kandiur, but less beautiful, is reproduced. Obviously this indicates a measure of indebtedness on the part of the artists of Rājārāja's day to those of earlier times.

*Dakṣiṇāmūrti*. In another panel (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 3) on the east wall, a wonderful representation of Dakṣiṇāmūrti (of the yogic variety?) is found. Here again the face is worn out. The *jaṭās* are shown behind, in wave form. The upper right hand, perhaps, carries a *paraśu* and the upper left hand a rosary of beads (*akṣhamālā*). The lower left hand is gracefully thrown over the right knee, while the lower right hand probably holds a *ḍamaru* which rests against the couchant bull facing the Lord. Śiva wears a broad necklace and a *vastrayajñopavīta* on the body.

<sup>1</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *The Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, Pl. LXIX.

<sup>2</sup> *Roopa-Lekhā*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, and Vol. XXVII, Nos. 1 and 2.



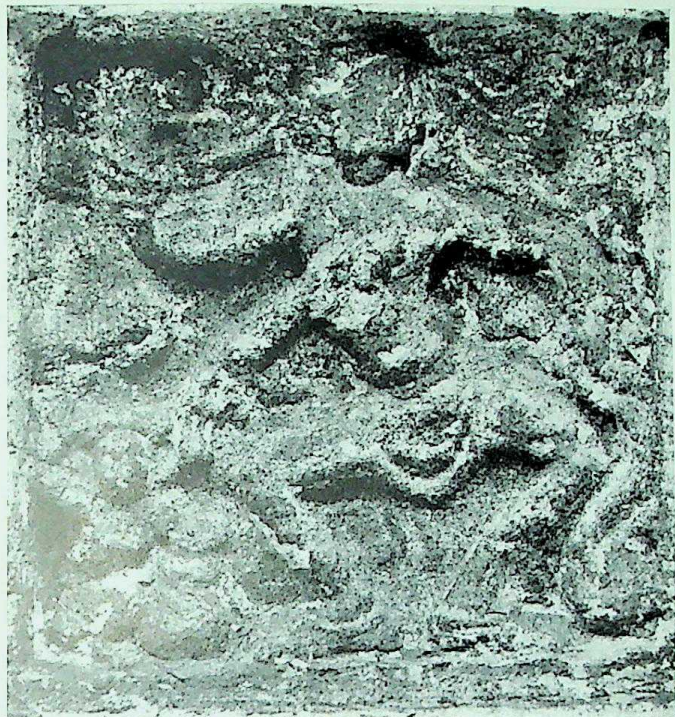


Fig. 2. Natesa. Panel on north wall of sanctum. Śiva Temple, Kandiur. 10" × 6". Early Chola period. *Circa* 900 A.D.



Fig. 3. Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Panel on east wall of sanctum. Śiva Temple, Kandiur. 10" × 6". Early Chola period. *Circa* 900 A.D.



Fig. 4. Ardhanārīśvara. Śiva Temple, Kandiur. 2½' × 1½'. Early Chola period. Late 9th century A.D.



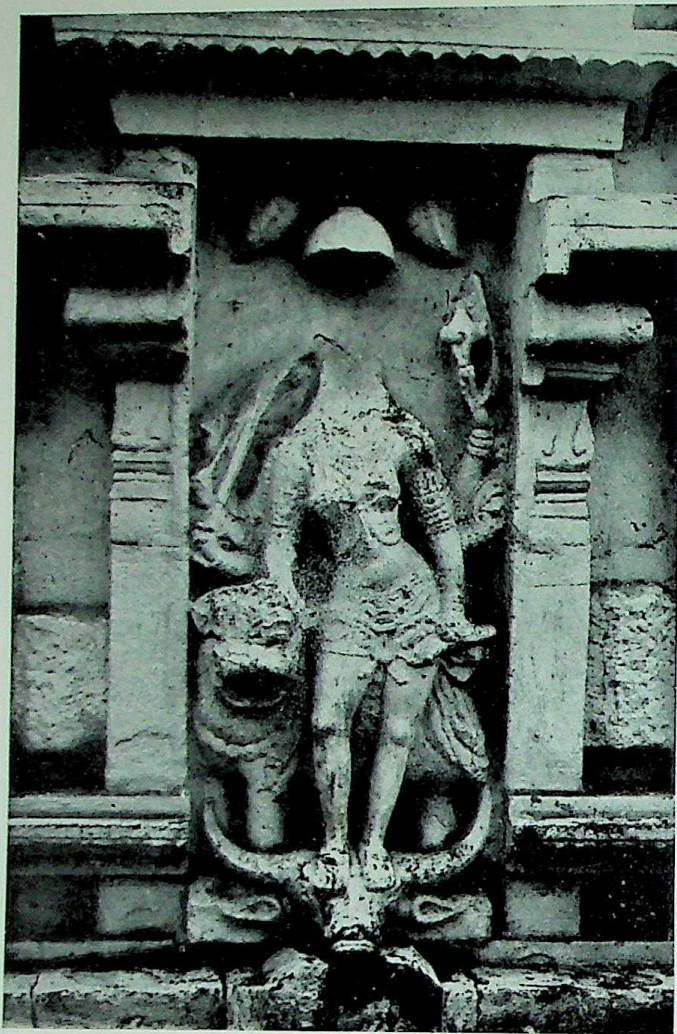


Fig. 5. Durgā. West wall of Śiva Temple, Kandiur.  
Circa 1000 A.D.



Fig. 6. Subrahmanya. North side of *gopura*.  
Śiva Temple, Kandiur. Early Chōla  
period (Rājendra I). Circa 1050 A.D.



Fig. 7. Sūrya. Cloister of Śiva Temple,  
Sivapuram. Late Pallava period.  
Circa 800 A.D.



Fig. 8. Subrahmanya. Cloister of Śiva  
Temple, Sivapuram. Early Chōla period.  
Circa 900 A.D.



## RARE SCULPTURES OF THE EARLY CHOĻA PERIOD

The ends of upper garment worn on the waist terminate in an elegant bow with fluttering ends. The way the right leg is crossed over the left one is worthy of note and is in keeping with the rhythm which characterises the beautiful rendering of Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

Amongst other interesting sculptures are Vṛishārūḍha (Śiva and Umā riding the bull) and Kalyāṇasundara, in which Viṣṇu is seen giving Pārvatī in marriage to Śiva.

### RĀMĀYAṆA PANELS AT THE ŚIVA TEMPLE, KANDIYUR

Amongst these are Brahmā listening to the *Devas*, Viṣṇu as Śeṣhaśāyin, Daśaratha distributing *pāyasa*, and Sītā's marriage. This last mentioned is a masterpiece but difficult to photograph.

### SCULPTURES IN HIGH RELIEF IN THE ŚIVA TEMPLE, KANDIYUR

In this temple there are two Brahmā images both in the early Choḷa style. One of them has been removed to Tanjore where it is now housed within an artificial bower in front of the collector's office. Both of them are completely in the round. They have four faces, although the one at Tanjore has two hands and that in the temple has four. Stylistically, this Brahmā at Tanjore may belong to about 950 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The Brahmā figure now in the temple is of the same type as the one mentioned above but its more developed details prove it to be slightly later.

There are also two images, one of Subrahmaṇya and the other of a sage, both of life-size, one on either side of the entrance to the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. One of them is considerably older than the other which may belong to about 1000 A.D. Both are of great interest iconographically. Owing to their peculiar iconographical features, the priests and the local people refer to them as *dvārapālakas* because they are now found in the place where usually *dvārapālakas* are placed.

*Ardhanārīśvara* (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 4). Another rare sculpture is Śiva as *Ardhanārīśvara*. A most interesting feature of this image is that though usually represented as standing, here it is seated gracefully on a *bhadrāsana* with the right side leaning against the bull, right leg hanging down and the left leg bent and kept on the seat. Another exceptional *Ardhanārīśvara* figure of this type belonging to late Pallava times from Mahabalipuram is now in the Madras Museum. The usual ornaments seen in figures of Śiva are present. Like all early *Ardhanārīśvara* figures, it has only three hands, two at its right and one on the left. The left side being that of Pārvatī, all the marks of feminine beauty can be seen there including the *līlākamala* (sportive lotus) in the hand. The style of the sculpture is almost akin to that of the standing *Ardhanārīśvara* in the Nāgeśvara temple at Kumbhakonam. From stylistic details this figure may be said to belong to the end of the 9th century A.D. It was probably in the niche just behind the sanctum where there is now a *Lingodbhavamūrti*. Probably during Parāntaka's reign the substitution was effected.

<sup>1</sup> See *Rupam*, Nos. 35 and 36 July-October 1928, pp. 29-30 where this image is noticed and illustrated by O. C. Gangoly.



*Durgā*. On the west wall of the temple of the goddess in the second *prākāra* there is a *Durgā* sculpture. (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 5). It is very unfortunate that the head and right hand of this figure are broken and missing. In spite of this mutilation, the charm of the sculpture is apparent. It has eight arms and is standing on the head of a buffalo representing Mahishāsura. Rarely are the *Durgās* of the Choḷa and later periods shown with a lion behind as in this example. But the lion is generally found in the Pallava sculptures, for example the *Durgā* at Panamalai and at Kanchi, although in these the head of a buffalo below the feet of *Durgā* may not be found. So the combination of these two details here is of interest. Again the *chhatra* (umbrella) is done almost in the round, as also the *chauris*. This follows in the style of similar ones in the sculpture of Lalitā or Sarasvatī in the Big temple, Tanjore, and the sculptures of Brahmā at Tiruvaiyaru, but here the workmanship is not so evolved. There is no *prabhāvalī* behind the head while a *prabhā* is found in the *Durgā* from Tanjore. Our image may be dated to the close of the reign of Rājārāja I.

*Subrahmaṇya*. In the niches on the northern and southern sides of the *gopura* are a figure of Subrahmaṇya and Brahmā respectively. There are also a pair of beautiful *dvārapālakas* on either side of its entrance which faces the west. Architectural details of the *gopura* indicate that it may have been done during the time of Rājendra Choḷa I. As the above sculptures form an integral part of the *gopura* there is little doubt that they are contemporary with it. This is supported by the style of the figures themselves.

The image of Subrahmaṇya (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 6) has four hands and stands on a beautiful *padmāsana*. There is *jaṭāmakūṭa* on the head but some *jaṭās* are also shown as falling behind the head. *Patrakuṇḍalas* are worn while a number of *hāras* adorn the neck. There is *channavīra* on the body. The lower right hand is broken and missing. The upper right hand holds the *akṣhamālā*. The upper left hand carries a *vajra*, while the lower one is in the *kaṭyavalambita* posture. There is an elaborately worked *kīrtimukha* clasp on the waist. The waist-band in two courses is beautifully carved, with fine bow ornaments on either side. He wears only a loin cloth. Anklets, three in a group, are found on the legs. The posture is erect (*samabhaṅga*). The features of the face and the modelling of the sculpture are indeed very fine. The missing right hand may have shown the *vyākhyānamudrā* in which case this figure is also another representation of the Deśika variety of the deity. Here again is proof of the importance of the Subrahmaṇya cult at this place, which probably came in the wake of the expulsion of the Brahmā cult by Śaivism. That the former cult has continued since then in the area is known from the existence of a few important Subrahmaṇya *kshetras*, of which Svāmimalai, a *kshetra* near Kumbhakonam, and not far from Kandiur, is well-known and is of especial interest. In the corresponding niche on the other side of the *gopura* is an image of Brahmā which also gives additional strength to our hypothesis.



### VISHṆU TEMPLES AT KANDIYUR

A few yards to the south of the Śiva temple are the other two temples of which the Vishṇu temple is of interest to us. It has a Vijayanagar *gopura* and within the *prākāra* are two shrines both facing east. Their architectural details suggest that they belong to about the 11th century A.D. On the walls of the temple there are no interesting specimens of sculpture.

Of the two shrines, the one on the north is now dedicated to Vishṇu and the other to Lakshmī. Though the Vishṇu shrine seems to have been intended as a Vaishnava one, the Lakshmī shrine does not seem to have been as intended, for there are niches on the three walls of the sanctum, from which the original sculptures appear to have been removed, leaving the niches now blank. Secondly, a frieze of Śiva-*gaṇas* can be seen running along the entire length of the top-most portion of the walls of the sanctum, just below the cornice. Thirdly, at the northwest corner of this frieze is a carving of Śiva-*linga* being worshipped. These details prove beyond doubt that originally this shrine was dedicated to Śiva. In ancient times, before sectarianism developed into bigotry, erection of shrines to Śiva and Vishṇu, side by side, was common, as for instance at Chidambaram. So even here. But obviously at a later date,<sup>1</sup> the Śiva-*linga* and other Saivite idols of the temple were removed and an image of Lakshmī installed therein. Does not this suggest a similarity with the practice of building of mosques, with the help of the materials of Hindu temples by the Muslim kings ?

Besides these two shrines, at the northwest corner of the *prākāra* there is a small shrine, of which the portico has been destroyed except for two granite pillars. These pillars are circular in section and are preserved to about half of their height. The most interesting thing about them is that near their tops there is carved a border of about 6" width, in which are found panels of beautiful bas-relief sculptures depicting scenes from the *Bhāgavata*. The style of the sculptures is almost akin to that of the bas-reliefs in the Śiva temple. These afford, therefore, another proof for the existence of a shrine dating from earlier times and for the great popularity of the *Purāṇas* at such an early period as the 9th-10th centuries A.D., in this area.

### ART AT TIRUPPUNDURUTTI

This village is at a distance of about three miles to the west of Kandiur. It is another of the Saptasthāna *kshetras*. It is also famous in the *Devāram* due to the fact that the saint Appar lived here for some time. But so far, no vestiges of sculpture, etc., dating back to the 7th or 8th century have been met with here.

The Śiva temple occupies the centre of the village. The central shrine here, like all other early ChoĻa temples, is also built of stone from bottom to top. Here, however, the proportions of the shrine are larger than those of the Kandiur Śiva temple. Besides, the style of the sculptures

<sup>1</sup> Ancient traditions of amity between the two Hindu sects continued say till about the Vijayanagar times.



met with here has become ornate. There is no pit round the central shrine. The small bas-relief panels, that are usually found on the plinth of the central shrines of temples belonging to earlier periods, are also conspicuously absent from this temple.

In the wall that connects the innermost *prākāra* with the *maṇḍapa* adjacent to the main shrine there is a window with openings in it. The spaces between two openings of the window have beautifully carved bas-relief panels illustrating scenes from the *Bhāgavata* and *Śiva Purāṇa*, in the style of the bas-reliefs from Kandiur. It is not known definitely whether this window belonged to this temple or to another one which does not exist now, and was removed therefrom and introduced here later—a hypothesis strengthened by the insignificant position in which it is now found. There are a number of inscriptions on the walls of the shrine. A few of them belong to the period of Parāntaka, which shows that it existed from still earlier times. But from what has been stated above it does not seem to be as old as the Śiva temple at Kandiur.

That there existed some other Śiva temple in the place is proved by a Durgā sculpture which is now found fixed on the outside of the southern wall of the outermost *prākāra*. The image is broken badly yet its beauty is apparent. In all respects it may be said to be an exact duplicate of the Durgā sculpture now in the Boston Museum.<sup>1</sup> It may, however, be noted here that this Durgā is different from that from Kandiur (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 5) as well as from that from Tanjore, as this has neither the *simha* behind it, which is present in the Kandiur one, nor has it a *prabhā* above its head which is found in the Tanjore one. The style of this sculpture is intermediate between the Kandiur and Tanjore examples.

About a mile to the west of this village is Tirualampolil, which is another Saptasthāna *kshetra*. It is not very important from the point of view of either architecture or sculpture. But the *dvārapālakas*, on either side of the entrance to the sanctum, are noteworthy. They are comparatively small in size and have two hands only. Their workmanship is superb. Their special interest lies in the fact that they are trampling on beautifully sculptured elephant heads. This feature makes them unique specimens of their kind.

#### BRONZES AND ICONS AT SIVAPURAM

Sivapuram is a village situated at about a distance of five miles to the east of Kumbhakonam. The Śiva temple of this place has been sung by the *Devāram* hymnists. The original temple has been recently rebuilt. But fortunately some of ancient sculptures are preserved. Of these, a Saptamātrika group is now found in the temple garden. At the entrance to the *garbhagṛha* on either side is a *dvārapālaka* which is clearly in the early Choḷa style but later than the *dvārapālakas* of Tirualampolil and of the Sūrya shrine in the Nāgeśvara temple. They have only two hands and the characteristic sacred thread with beautiful flower designs. The other ancient sculptures that are found in the cloister on either side of the entrance

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in *The Hindu View of Art*, by Mulk Raj Anand.



into the first *prākāra* include two Sūryas and a Subrahmaṇya. Of the Sūryas, one (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 7) is in the late Pallava style. Its characteristics, such as high relief technique, disproportionate treatment of bust and the portion below waist, the high *kirīṭa*, prominent *yajñopavīta* going over the right forearm, the rounding off of the points of the elbows, the sparseness of decorative details and the realistic delineation of the lotus in the hands which go above the shoulders are all marked here. Further, the treatment of the waist cloth with thick bows on either side and a broad loop in front is another Pallava feature. The other Sūrya figure is obviously in the ChoĻa style.

The Subrahmaṇya image (Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 8) is distinctly earlier than the Subrahmaṇya image met with at Kandiur. This is known from its delicate treatment as well as from such significant decorative details as bead-necklace and bead-*channavīra* going over the arms on either side and the waist-band with bows and broad loop in front.

*Bronze Naṭeśa and Śivakāmi.* By far the most important sculptures met with in this temple are those in bronze representing Naṭeśa (Pl. XXVI, Fig. 1) and Śivakāmasundarī. These and a few other bronzes were unearthed recently as treasure-troves and handed over to the temple authorities for worship in the temple itself. The image of the goddess is of the usual type, perhaps comparatively later than the Naṭeśa. But Naṭeśa is of great interest. It is in the usual *bhujāṅgatrāsita* or *ānanda-tāṇḍava* mode of dance. But from the fact that its *prabhā* is apsidal in form, rather than oval or circular, and that there are only three-pronged flames, at the fringe of the tube-like but solid arch, it is seen that it is earlier than the Naṭeśa from Velāṅgaṇṇi and Tiruvālāṅgāḍu and the Naṭeśa in the Big Temple at Tanjore. The majesty of the pose testifies to the boldness of conception and dexterity of execution, which are apparent not only in its front side but also in its back. Pl. XXVI, Fig. 1 is thus one of the rare examples of Naṭeśas in this form, belonging to the early 10th century. Other details such as the manner of holding the flame in the left upper hand, the bold facial features, the high relief in which the details of the head are shown, the restrained but beautiful ornamentation and the perfection of modelling and poise go to prove its early date.

### CULTS

The occurrence of large Brahmā figures at such places as Kavuntattangudi and Kandiur and their subsequent neglect may have to be taken as indicating the fact that before Śaivism became dominant in this area, the worship of Brahmā was also in vogue and that only from about the middle of the 10th century or so, Brahmā worship was completely avoided.

The existence of large figures of Subrahmaṇya in the form of Deśika or teacher at Kandiur suggests that after the Brahmā worship was discontinued, the worship of Subrahmaṇya as Svāminātha or Gurunātha became popular.

The unique life-size images of river-goddesses in the Kāśi Viśvanāthasvāmi temple at Kumbhakonam shows unmistakably the greatness of the Nadi-mātrika cult, especially at Kumbhakonam, which is famous for the Mahāmakhā festival which occurs once in twelve years.



AN ILLUSTRATED MS. OF MAHĀPURĀṆA IN THE COLLECTION OF  
SRI DIGAMBAR NAYA MANDIR, DELHI

Moti Chandra

**P**USHPADANTA, author of the *Mahāpurāṇa*, enjoyed the patronage of Bharata, the minister of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Kṛishṇa III (939-968 A.D.). Bharata was still alive when Pushpadanta's *Mahāpurāṇa* was completed in 965 A.D. His son, Nanna, succeeded him in probably 968 A.D. It was in his time that Pushpadanta wrote his *Jasaharachariu* and *Nāyakumārachariu*.<sup>1</sup>

The poet Pushpadanta came of a good Brahman family. His parents were however converted to Jainism. The poet suffered poverty in his youth and after serving a minor king came to Mānyakheta (modern Malkhed), the capital of the Rāshtrakūṭas. There he joined the service of Bharata and at his request began writing the *Mahāpurāṇa* in 959 A.D., which he completed in 965 A.D. With the completion of his *magnum opus* the poet attained wider fame. The glory of the Rāshtrakūṭas however soon came to an end. Mānyakheta was plundered in 972 A.D. and the poet became destitute once more.

The term *Mahāpurāṇa* in Digambara Jain literature denotes a great narrative of ancient times. While the *purāṇas* deal with the life of an individual or holy person, the *Mahāpurāṇa* on the other hand describes the life of sixty-three prominent figures of the Jaina faith. The sixty-three persons whose lives are described in the *Mahāpurāṇa* may be classified under the following headings: twenty-four Tirthaṅkaras (one who has attained salvation); twelve Chakravartīs (universal conquerors); nine Vāsudevas (descendents of Vāsudeva Kṛishṇa); nine Baladevas (descendents of Baladeva, elder brother of Kṛishṇa); and nine Prati-Vāsudevas (opponents of Kṛishṇa).

Within the framework of the main story many other stories are introduced, with the result that the narration at many places becomes very obscure and tedious. The chief merit of the subsidiary stories lies in the laudation of Jainism and they therefore follow a set pattern. Only those of some interest are narrated herein.

Pushpadanta first offers homage to Rishabhanātha and to the Goddess of Learning and declares his intention to compose a *Mahāpurāṇa*. It was on his way to Mepādi (Mānyakheta) while he was resting in a grove, that two citizens, namely Annaiya and Indarāya, approached and requested him to visit the minister Bharata. On being assured that Bharata was a magnanimous person, the poet went to him and was requested to compose a *Mahāpurāṇa*. At first unwilling to take

<sup>1</sup> *The Mahāpurāṇa of Pushpadanta* (ed. by P. L. Vaidya), Vol. I, Pt. XXVIII ff. and p. 593 ff.; Vol. II, X ff.; Vol. III, XXV ff.



up such a stupendous task he refused, but when pressed invoked the aid of Gomukha, a *yaksha*, and Padamāvatī, a *yakshiṇī*, and commenced the work.

The story begins thus :

Once upon a time at Rājagṛiha when King Śreṇika with his consort Chellaṇādevī was in his court, it was reported that Mahāvīra (the 24th Tirthaṅkara), had arrived in a garden outside the city. The king hastened to meet him and offered prayers to him.

After the reception of Māhavīra was over, the king asked his disciple Goyama to recite to him the *Mahāpurāṇa*, which he did.

He first began with the contributions of the Tirthaṅkaras to civilization. The last of the last great men (Kulakaras) was Nāhi (Nābhi) and his queen was Marudevī. Indra knowing that a Jina was to be born in their house ordered Kubera to decorate the town of Ayodhyā. Six months before the birth of the Jina, Indra sent six goddesses, Siri, Dihi, Kanti, Kitti and Lachchhi to the earth to purify the womb of Marudevī. The mother then saw sixteen objects (according to the Śvetāmbaras they are fourteen in number) in a dream. Nāhi explained to his wife what the dreams foretold, namely, that she would be mother of a Jina (the Omniscient). The Jina then descended into Marudevī's womb in the shape of a bull. Gods attended the event and gems were showered by Kubera. The Jina was born in due course. Indra accompanied by the gods arrived and offered prayer to the newborn babe. Indra then replaced the holy babe with a magic babe and took the holy babe to Mt. Meru and after giving him a ceremonial bath brought him back to his parents. This event is usually called a *kallāṇa* or *jinajanmābhisheka kalyāṇa* (auspicious bathing of the Jina).

In course of time, the holy babe, whose name was Rishabha, grew into a handsome and virtuous youth. At first he would not marry, but his father persuaded him to marry Jasavai and Suṇandā, daughters of the kings of Kachchha and Mahākachchha respectively. The marriage festival was attended by dancing and singing and the ceremony was rounded off by the distribution of gifts.

One day Jasavai (wife of Rishabha), saw in a dream the mountain Meru, the sun, the ocean and the globe entering her mouth. These signs foretold the birth of a son destined to be a sovereign ruler. In the course of time, a son named Bharata was born to Jasavai. As the boy grew up, his father (Rishabha) taught him various arts and crafts. Bharata had ninety-nine brothers and a sister named Bāmbhī. Bharata used to give lessons in art and literature to his sisters, and once when a severe famine overtook the people and when they appealed to Rishabha for succour, it was Bharata who taught the people various arts and crafts. Bharata's stepmother Suṇandā also gave birth to a son named Bāhubalī and a daughter names Sundarī.

Rishabha was placed on the throne by his father Nābhi. One day thereafter while Rishabha was engrossed in worldly pleasures, the god Indra reminded him about his mission to propagate the Jaina faith. Indra also sent a celestial nymph, Nīlamjasā, to perform a dance before



Ṛishabha. At the end of the dance Nilamjasā fell dead. Ṛishabha seeing her sad end was convinced of the momentariness of life. While Ṛishabha was brooding over the transitoriness of existence, the thought dawned on him that to secure release from one's accumulated actions one should exhaust them. He at once decided to renounce the world. The gods who were waiting for this event encouraged him to propagate the Jaina doctrine.

Ṛishabha put his son Bharata on the throne, gave Poyaṇapura to Bāhubali, and then set out in a palanquin to renounce his worldly life. He was followed by his aged parents, his wives and his ninety-nine sons. This event was celebrated by the gods. Ṛishabha then went to the forest, sat on a slab of stone and plucked five handfuls of hair from his head which were received by Indra and thrown in the Milky Ocean. Ṛishabha then took the five Great Vows and became a naked monk.

While Ṛishabha was observing the conduct of life ordained for a Jaina monk, Nami and Vinami, sons of the kings of Kachchha and Mahākachchha respectively, and who were Ṛishabha's brothers-in-law, visited him and complained that while he was distributing the earth they did not receive their share. Ṛishabha being a recluse was confounded at the complaint. But a friendly Nāgarāja (serpent king) realising Ṛishabha's discomfiture appeared before Nami and Vinami and told them that Ṛishabha before renouncing the world had informed him that the southern and northern portions of the Vaitāḍhya mountain belonging to the Vidyādhara were to be assigned to them. The Nāga king then showed the royal pair the various cities situated on the mountain slopes and thus saved Ṛishabha from an awkward situation.

Ṛishabha then spent six months in meditation, taking only pure food. In the course of his wanderings he came to Gayapura, where Somaprabha, son of Bāhubali, was ruling. Somaprabha's brother, Śreyāṃsa, had dreamt the previous night of auspicious symbols, foretelling the visit of a great person. When the visit of Ṛishabha materialised, he offered Ṛishabha a jar of sugar-cane juice which he accepted. Ṛishabha in due course acquired knowledge of telepathy and when he acquired the knowledge of *guṇasthānas* (religious belief) at Nandanavana, the gods celebrated the event and built up a *samavasaraṇa* (the congregation of the Jinas) on the occasion. At the time Ṛishabha obtained *Kevela-jñāna* (omniscience) the *chakratna* (discus-jewel) manifested itself in Bharata's armoury and a son was born to him. Bharata then paid a visit to his father Ṛishabha. Men of piety also visited Ṛishabha who explained to them the philosophy and geography of Jainism. Hearing his discourses a large number of persons renounced the world and became his *gaṇadharas* (chief disciples). Similarly Brāhmī and Sundarī (Ṛishabha's two daughters) became the first nuns of the order. The first lay disciple was one Sūyakitti and the first lady disciple was one Priyamvadā. The first disciple to obtain emancipation was one Aṇantavīra. Marichi, however, refused to accept his teaching.

In the meanwhile Bharata (son of Ṛishabha) started on his universal campaign in autumn after saluting the Holy Being, going round the *chakra* (the discus, a sign of universal sovereignty) and





PLATE D. Bharata holding court. Illustration from a Mahāpurāṇa Ms. Late 15th century.  
Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.



distributing alms to the poor. Accompanied by a mighty army and led by the *chakra*, Bharata proceeded to the East. After crossing the Ganga river he wanted to conquer Magadha. He shot an arrow which fell in the house of the Magadha king who was very much enraged. But at the advice of his minister, the Magadha king accepted Bharata as *chakravartī* (universal ruler) and offered him homage.

Proceeding to the south, Bharata came to Varatanu's domain, and discharged an arrow which fell in his court. The king thereupon at once accepted Bharata's sovereignty. Similarly Bharata conquered Sindh and Prabhāsātīrtha in the west. After conquering Malwa, etc., Bharata became the sovereign ruler of the Arya region. Thereafter he proceeded to the Vaitāḍhya mountain to complete his conquest of the remaining three continents.

While Bharata was encamped at Vaitāḍhya, a god requested him to open a passage for the god through a cave. When Bharata's general, at the royal behest, tried to 'strike' a passage through the cave it burst open causing excitement among its residents. The guardian deity gave Bharata presents and he stayed there for six months. Led by the discus (a symbol of universal power) the army marched onwards, but to avoid darkness Bharata's general forced the sun and the moon into the cave and with their help the army proceeded to the world of the *nāgas* (serpents of the netherworld). To reach there Bharata's engineers built a bridge across two rivers. In order to impede the progress of Bharata's army two Mlecchha rulers, Āvarta and Kirāta, invoked the help of the Nāga Meghamukha who poured incessant rain. The army was saved only by the use of the *charma* (bloated skin considered as a symbol of a universal ruler) gem acting as an umbrella. The opposing armies were then defeated and Bharata proceeded to Himavanta mountain (the Himalayas) along the Sindh river, whose guardian deity presented him a garland. At the Himavanta mountains, after observing a fast, Bharata discharged an arrow. The mountain deities, at first inclined to fight, realised Bharata's greatness and offered him presents. On Vṛishabha mountain Bharata added his name to the list of all past kings inscribed there. Then he came to the bank of the Ganga and the Ganga herself bathed him and offered him tribute. Proceeding further, Bharata came to Timisā, a cave of the Vaitāḍhya mountain. The gates of the cave were opened for him and he stayed there for six months. Naṭṭamālī (the presiding deity of the cave) paid him tribute. He could however pass through the cave with the consent of his maternal uncles Nami and Vinami (Rishabha's brothers-in-law), the lords of the Vidyādharas. With the help of the light produced by the *kāgaṇī* (a particular kind of resplendent magical jewel which only a universal conqueror could possess) he passed through the cave and came to Kailāsa, where he offered prayers to Rishabha who was practising penance there.

From Kailāsa Bharata came to the city of Ayodhyā but his *chakra* (discus) which led forward his army would not proceed further. He was informed that its behaviour was due to the presence of his brother, Bāhubalī, who had remained unconquered and refused to accept



his sovereignty. He was not cowed down and challenged Bharata to a fight. When their armies were about to meet, their ministers interceded and implored Bharata and Bāhubali to fight a duel in three ways, i.e., fix their gaze on each other without moving their eyelashes, strike each other, and engage in a wrestling match. The victory was to go to the party who emerged most successful from the test. Bāhubali won the first two tests and in the wrestling match he lifted up Bharata who thereupon thought of his *chakra* and it at once stood by his side. On seeing this, Bāhubali dropped his brother to the ground and realisation came to Bāhubali that his brother was a *chakravartī*. Bāhubali then asked forgiveness of his brother and desired to become a monk. But Bharata, knowing that in truth he had been defeated by Bāhubali, offered to renounce the world. The ministers intervened and Bāhubali placing his son on the throne of Ayodhyā, returned to Kailāsa. Bharata visited him a year later and praised him but Bāhubali was oblivious to praise and after some time he attained *Kevalajñāna* — the omniscient knowledge. Thereafter Bharata enjoyed perfect sovereignty over the six continents.

Bharata, after his universal conquest, distributed liberal alms to the Brahmans. One day, perturbed by a dream, he approached his father, Rishabha, practising penance in the Himalayas, who appraised him of impending bad times (*duḥshamā*) when men would lose their morality. Rishabha then explained at length the various theories of creation and the topography of the earth. He also related the story of Atibala and his queen Manoharā reigning at Alakā in the region of Meru. Atibala bequeathed the throne to his son Mahābala who had four ministers, namely Mahāmati, Saṁbhinnamati, Satamati and Svayāmbuddha. Svayāmbuddha championed Jainism, Mahāmati followed the Chārvāka School, and Saṁbhinnamati had embraced Buddhism. Once upon a time the minister Svayāmbuddha related to his master Mahābala the story of Mahābala's ancestor, Aravinda, who suffering from some disease, ordered his son, Kuruvinda, to prepare a pool of animal blood. The son, instead of carrying out the command of his father, prepared a pool of lac-dye. When entering the pool, Aravinda found out the ruse and rushed out to slay his son, but stumbled and was killed by his own sword.

In another story Svayāmbuddha related to Mahābala the adventures of Maṇimāli, son of Daṇḍaka, another ancestor of Mahābala. Daṇḍaka after death became a python and kept guard over his own treasure. Once Maṇimāli came to the treasure house, but the python, recognising him as his son, did him no harm. Maṇimāli, learning the mystery of the python from a Jaina monk, taught the python Jaina doctrines and as a result the python was re-born as a god. He visited Maṇimāli and presented him a necklace.

Mahābala on learning from his minister Svayāmbuddha about the pious deeds of his (Mahābala's) forefathers, decided to pay a visit to the Jina at the Mandara mountain. At the juncture, a pair of *Chāraṇamunis* (flying ascetics) informed Svayāmbuddha (minister of Mahābala)



that his royal master was destined in his tenth birth to be a Tirthaṅkara. According to them, Mahābala, in one of his previous births, was born as Jayavarman, son of King Śrīsheṇa and incensed at the behaviour of his father, who had bequeathed the throne to his younger son, Jayavarman approached the Jina Svayaṃprabha to become a monk. But at that time he became impressed with the regalia of a Vidyādhara king who was present there, and consequently was attracted towards a worldly life. As a consequence of the attraction Jayavarman was born as a king in his next life. In that life as well, Svayaṃbuddha, was born as his wise counsellor, and rescued Jayavarman from the evil designs of his other ministers. After his death, Jayavarman (later on to be born as Mahābala), was born as Lalitāṅga in the Īśāna heaven, and married to Svayaṃprabhā and Kanakaprabhā.

One day, Lalitāṅga, realising that his days as a god were coming to an end, worshipped the Jinas and after death was born as Vajrajaṃgha, son of King Vajrabāhu. While he was growing up, his consort in a previous birth, pining for him, was also born as Śrīmatī, daughter of Vajradanta and Lakshmīmatī. Seeing one day in a dream the visit of a Jina, Śrīmatī fell unconscious and was reminded of her love of Lalitāṅga in a previous birth. Her parents, however, thinking her lovesick, put her under the care of a wise nurse.

In the meanwhile, Vajradanta, father of Śrīmatī, hearing of the omniscience of Jasahara paid him homage and attained knowledge. After returning home he told his daughter Śrīmatī about her former birth and her impending meeting with Vajrajaṃgha, her lover in a former birth.

One day Śrīmatī spoke her mind to her nurse. The story she gave to her nurse was that in her third previous birth she was born as Nirṇāmikā, daughter of a merchant, Nāgadatta, who had a large family. One day, she, after picking up some fruit from a forest, saw people proceeding to meet a Jina. She also went with them to meet the Jina and asked him the reason of her poverty. The Jina informed her that her poverty was due to the sin she had committed by throwing a dead dog on a monk. On his advice, Śrīmatī observed fast and after death was born as the wife of Lalitāṅga (Vajrajaṃgha) and after his death she was born as Śrīmatī. She fainted at the recollection of Lalitāṅga, and later on drew his portrait and asked her nurse to find out his whereabouts. The nurse took the portrait to the Jina temple, but nobody could recognise him.

Vajradanta, father of Śrīmatī, in the meanwhile returned and gave her a story of his previous birth, in which he was born as Chandrakīrti and enjoyed the kingdom with his friend Jayakīrti. After their death they were born in the Mahendra heaven. This existence was followed by their rebirth as Śrīvarman and Vibhishāṇa, sons of King Śrīdhara and Manoharā. After their father had attained omniscience, they ascended the throne jointly. As their mother had practised charity she was born as god Lalitāṅga after her death. After his brother's death, Śrīvarman carried his body from place to place. His mother, now god Lalitāṅga, convinced him that death was a hard reality. After death Śrīvarman was born



as Indra in the Achytha heaven.

While all this was going on, Śrīmatī's nurse wandered over all the countries with the portrait of Lalitāṅga. In Utpalakheḍa, Vajrajaṅgha (Lalitāṅga) happened to see the portrait and fell in a swoon. After gaining consciousness he wanted to be reunited with his beloved. His father, Vajrabāhu, approached Śrīmatī's father, Vajradanta, and the marriage was arranged.

After their death Vajrajaṅgha and Śrīmatī were born in Uttarakuru as twins. There they recollected their previous births when they met a pair of flying ascetics, one of whom happened to be no other than Svayambuddha, later on to be the minister of Mahābala. He recounted to them the account of his and his master's previous births. Next Vajrajaṅgha was born as Śrīdhara in Īśāna heaven and Śrīmatī changing her sex was born as prince Suvidhi and was married to Manoramā. Their son was Keśava.

Gautama, the disciple of Mahāvīra, continued his narration further. King Somaprabha placed his eldest son Jaya on the throne and became a monk along with his brother Śreyāṃsa. Jaya was informed about the *Svayamvara* of Sulochanā, daughter of Akampana, and was chosen by her to be her husband. Arkakīrti, a rival, fought with him a duel but lost. Finally they made up between themselves.

While returning home Jaya's wife was attacked by an elephant but her life was saved by a sylvan deity whom Sulochanā had done a good turn in a former life. Sulochanā then told Jaya the story of her former life when she was a female pigeon and he her lord.

Incidentally the story of merchant Suketu and his rival Nāgadatta is introduced. One day while Suketu's wife was carrying food for her husband she met a monk at *nāgagṛiha* (serpent temple) of her husband's rival, Nāgadatta, and offered the deity food. As a result there was a shower of gold and gems, which was claimed by Nāgadatta while Suketu claimed it as heavenly gift to his wife. Nāgadatta thereupon decided to take the gold and gems to the king, but as soon as he touched them they turned to charcoal. Nāgadatta, surprised at the miracle, handed over the wealth to Suketu. The next day Nāgadatta found a valuable jewel in the Nāga temple, and incensed by the previous incident, tried to crush it with a stone, but the stone hit him instead. Nāgadatta then asked a boon from the serpent god for the possession of an army to defeat Suketu, but the Nāga told him that Suketu could not be killed. Suketu subsequently renounced the world and after his death became a god.

Jaya then asked Sulochanā to continue the story of his previous births, particularly those related to him by the Jina Guṇapāla. King Guṇapāla, who renounced the world, had two sons Śrīpāla and Vasupāla. One day news was brought to his queen that a sage was staying in a grove where under a banyan tree there was a *yaksha* temple with people engrossed in festivities. Two women, one of them in the garb of a man, were dancing. King Vasupāla did not like their dance. It was prophesied that the man who recognised the woman in



man's garb would be her husband. Śrīpāla, brother of the king, thereafter is involved in various adventures in which he is removed by a demon in the form of a horse. He is rescued by a *yaksha* and married to Vidyādhara girls named Vidyutavegā, Sukhāvati and Vappilā, along with six others.

One day Bharata dreamt that the Meru mountain was shaking, which portended the death of Rishabha. Bharata at once reached Kailāsa and found Indra and other gods assembled there. They consigned the body of Rishabha, who had attained emancipation. Bharata returned to Ayodhyā and finding a grey hair on his head renounced the world. Soon attaining omniscience, he obtained release from the world.

With the advent of Islam in the closing years of the 12th century, the art traditions of India were destined to undergo radical changes, at least in Northern India. The apathy, nay actual hostility, of the ruling race to traditional art expression such as temple architecture, sculpture and painting, spelled ruin to the rich artistic heritage of the country. But in spite of all persecutions and neglect artistic traditions deeply rooted in the life of the people are hard to uproot. Bereft of court patronage Indian artists in the 13th and 14th centuries sought the help of rich bankers, merchants and feudal chiefs, who seem to have given it ungrudgingly. Unfortunately, the paintings of this period are rare, mostly painted on palm-leaf, and their interest is iconographic. But whatever has remained proves the continuity of Indian art though in a debased form.

In the preservation of painting, Śvetāmbara Jain teachers, princes and merchants played an important part. They were actuated with the desire to preserve their sacred texts, which if illustrated were bound to attract better respect and attention of laymen. It is, however, difficult to say, in the absence of documents, whether the Digāmbara Jains also followed the Śvetāmbaras in getting their sacred books illustrated for religious merit, and whether they ever established Jñāna Bhaṇḍāras as their Śvetāmbara confreres for the propagation of learning. There is, however, little doubt that the Digāmbaras patronised art and architecture.

The Jains in the medieval times patronised painting for temple decoration as much as the Hindus. The Digāmbara Jain wall paintings in the Indrasabhā cave temples of Ellora (8th-13th centuries), the appearance of a naked Jain monk on a palanquin accompanied by woman and soldiers in the Brahmanical Kailāsa temple at Ellora (perhaps an indication of the forcible occupation of the temple by the Jains in the 12th century) and the Tirumalai frescos (11th-12th century) in South India bespeak to the artistic activity of the Digāmbaras. There is reason to believe that illustrated palm-leaf Mss. of the Digāmbara sect must have existed in Northern India, but unfortunately none so far is available. The only illustrated Digāmbara Jain palm-leaf Ms. of *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama* with Dhavalā Tīkā is datable to 1112-1120 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The miniatures represent laymen hearing the discourses of the monks, the Jinas, the

<sup>1</sup> *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama*, ed. by Dr. Hiralal, Vol. I, p. 11, Pl. I.



goddess Chakreśvari, and such decorative motifs as rosettes, etc. The style conforms to the conventions of the Western Indian School with emphasis on linear draughtsmanship, though the protrusion of the farther eye is not so prominent in the miniatures as in Western Indian paintings. The importance of the *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama* miniatures cannot be minimised as these are the earliest known miniatures of the Digambara Jain sect, and should set at rest the controversy that Western Indian miniature painting was exclusively sponsored by the Śvetāmbaras. Between the early 12th century *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama* miniatures and the near mid-16th century *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. there is almost a lacunae of 400 years in the history of Digambara painting, though it may be surmised that Digambara Jain merchants, who built temples to consecrate the Jinas, must have patronised illustrated Mss. as well, which in the absence of Jñāna Bhaṇḍāras where they could be preserved for posterity, have been lost.

It is also probable that the Digambara Jains in the 11th century, emulating the example of the Śvetāmbaras, who were turning out hundreds of illustrated manuscripts of the *Kalpasūtras* and *Kalakāchāryakathā* thought of illustrating the *Mahāpurāṇa* which had the same appeal to them as the *Kalpasūtra* to the Śvetāmbaras. The appearance of the illustrated Mss. of the *Mahāpurāṇa*, datable to the 16th century, lends support to this view.

The illustrated manuscript of the *Mahāpurāṇa* in the collection of the Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi, is unfortunately in a mutilated condition with an unknown number of folios missing. The surviving folios, numbering 142, measure  $11\frac{1}{4}" \times 3\frac{1}{4}"$ . The text in Nagari characters is written uniformly in thirteen lines on every folio. The illustrations appear on either side of the folios and at times full page illustrations are met with. Their background is uniformly lacquer-red which sets off the composition in bold relief. The palette is limited, being confined to white, black, blue, yellow, carmine, green, and magenta. Colour modelling is absent, though in the treatment of mountains and trees certain amount of shading is noticeable.

The use of perspective is elementary and no attempt is made to distinguish planes. The method of continuous narration is used, though the incidents pertaining to the same episode are represented in different compartments. To relieve the monotony of the monochrome background we find that flowers, rosettes and decorative fringes are at times introduced.

Architecture plays an insignificant part in the compositions. Interior settings are provided with cusped arches and pavilions have flattened scalloped domes provided with *śikhāras*. This economy in architectural detail may be due to the emphasis on continuous narration which did not permit incidental decoration, such as architecture and landscape, which detracted attention from the main theme. This economy of architectural detail continued to be a characteristic feature of the later Rajasthani school, though Mughal painting, inspired by the Timurid school, treated architecture and landscape as essential components of a composition.

In the treatment of human figures stylistic and angular distortion approximates to the



Western Indian style except that the movement is more dynamic and vigorous. This may be due to the theme which provided more free scope to the imagination, as also the greater picture space which allowed representation of more details in the figure composition. The draughtsmanship is angular though a tendency at rounding off is noticeable in the treatment of the shoulders and the body line. The farther eye protrudes into space, and the end of the other eye is extended to the ear. The eyeball is indicated by a dot and at times red tinge is added as a sign of beauty. The eyebrows are arched; the nose is pointed; the mouth is indicated by a thin line; the chest is exaggerated; the waist is thin and the drawing of hands and feet indifferent. The *mudrās* of the hands, however, are helpful in enhancing the vigour of action. The women are more delicately treated with slender pinpoint waists, large eyes and well developed breasts.

The postures of the figures are, however, much more varied than in the Western Indian school. They are depicted as standing, sitting, running, fighting, dancing and in moods of devotion, used purposefully to indicate the mood of the moment which tells its own story. In this respect the illustrations show a definite advance over the stiff and formal postures in Western Indian paintings. The lively poses express movement in the absence of other expedients such as dramatic composition and atmospheric perspective.

The emphasis being purely on narration, the treatment of landscape is rudimentary, used either to relieve the monotony of the plain ground or to indicate the location of certain incidents.

The sky is represented in the following manner :

- (1) A smear of blue over architectural setting.
- (2) Painted blue in wavy pattern, the edge delineated by black wavy lines.
- (3) Covered with oblique strokes in black, interspersed with curious serpentine motifs, perhaps indicative of lightning or *tai* clouds of Persian painting.

Trees are represented conventionally. They have slender knotted trunks; the ovaloid tree tops are painted with foliage with serrated edges covered with oblique strokes emanating from the branches and yellow dots indicating fruit and flowers. The palm tree has a meandering trunk and hachured leaves. The plantain tree has straight trunks and hachured leaves.

Mountains and hills are represented in several ways :

- (1) A series of reduplicated hooks connected with each other by hachures, the entire area being painted on unprimed surface with splashes of blue, yellow and red.
- (2) Large serrated circles decorated with arabesque and splashes of blue and red.
- (3) Craggs, sometimes outlined in red, with a series of hooked rocks.
- (4) Piled up hooks resembling a floral design, with green splashes.
- (5) Pyramid made up of oblong panels with circular ends.

Water, without exception, is represented by the basket pattern motif associated with fish and other aquatic animals, natural and mythical. It is noteworthy that the fish often fit



in with the curvatures of the basket pattern, thus enhancing its decorative effect. The lakes and ponds are brick-built and stepped, with or without lotus flowers.

The animals are treated conventionally. The elephant retains its natural characteristics though certain anatomical details betray the heavy hand of convention. The horse with its crocodile-like neck, heavy jambs and thin delicate legs, approximates to its Persian counterpart. The treatment of the bull, the camel and the tiger shows their Western Indian ancestry. It is remarkable, however, that in spite of the doll-like treatment of the animals, their movements are more alive which fits in with the general spirit of composition.

The costumes and ornaments of both men and women are simple and show very slight variations. The women wear full sleeved or half sleeved *choli*, chequered *sārī*, *chādar* thrown over the head which at times assumes the balloon-like shape defining the figure more boldly, and skirt. The ornaments consist of tiara made of heart-shaped plaques, circular earrings, torque, *chūrīs*, *sīsmāṅga*, *chūdāmaṇi*, necklaces and circular *tilak* on the forehead.

The costume of the men is simple. They wear tiara made of heart-shaped plaques on a turban, *dupaṭṭā* passed over the shoulders or worn right across the chest, and chequered or striped *dhotī*. There is almost a complete absence of sewn garments. Occasionally, however, warriors and musicians wear tight fitting tunic reaching the waist. At times *jāṅghiā* (tight fitting shorts) is worn by the warriors and wrestlers. As regards ornaments, they wear circular earrings, torque, necklaces, *chūrīs* and bangles.

The textile designs are poor, consisting of checks, stripes and simple tie-dyed patterns often boldly outlined.

Unfortunately the manuscript is not dated and therefore to determine its approximate date one has to rely on stylistic affinities with known dated material. Besides its date, its provenance is also unknown, however on stylistic grounds it must be admitted that though the illustrations incorporate many of the stylistic features of Western Indian school, yet in the matter of details in the treatment of the human figure, landscape and costumes, they seem to belong to a provincial school which may be U.P. About the date of the Ms., one thing is certain, that it could be dated to the closing years of the 15th century or a little later. In fixing up the date and provenance of the illustrated *Mahāpurāṇa* under discussion, two sets of documents, namely *Chandāyan* illustrations in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras,<sup>1</sup> and the Jaipur *Mahāpurāṇa* dated 1540<sup>2</sup> and painted at Palam, a village near Delhi, are useful. The *Chandāyan* illustrations have been dated to *circa* 1540 and their provenance

<sup>1</sup> Rai Krishnadasa, "An Illustrated Avadhī Ms. of Laur-Chandā in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras," *Lalit Kalā* Nos. 1-2 (1955-56), pp. 66-71.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Khandalavala, "A 'Gita Govinda' Series in the Prince of Wales Museum in the style of the 'Laur-Chandā' and 'Chaurapanchāśikā' Group," *Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum*, No. 4, where it is referred to as the Digambara Ms. The Jaipur Ms. belongs to the Digambara Jaina Mandir *Bada Terah Panthiyonka*.



assigned to Uttar Pradesh. A comparison of *Chandāyan* illustrations with the Digambar Naya Mandir *Mahāpurāṇa* illustrations suggest stylistic affinities. The linear draughtsmanship in the representation of human and animal figures and the use of monochrome background are common to both. But the differences are also clear. Whereas the *Mahāpurāṇa* illustrations are in horizontal panels, the *Chandāyan* illustrations following the style of Persian book illustrations appear in vertical panels. The draughtsmanship of the former is also more careful, avoiding the exaggerations wherever possible, preferring curves to obtain the effect of the rounding of the body line. The protuberance of the further eye remains just a convention and could be removed without doing injustice to figure drawing, whereas in the *Mahāpurāṇa* illustrations it forms an integral part of the figure drawing. In the representation of female figures with emphasis on small round breasts and pin-point waists, both sets follow the same convention. In the representation of costumes, however, there are clearly marked differences. Whereas in the *Mahāpurāṇa* illustrations mostly unsewn garments are shown, in the *Chandāyan* illustrations sewn garments as *jāmah* and trousers also appear. The heart-shaped tiara of the *Mahāpurāṇa* illustrations is absent. In the representation of the female costume there is, however, close resemblance, specially in the balloon-like treatment of the *oḍhni* behind the back.

The illustrations of the Jaipur *Mahāpurāṇa* dated 1540 though revealing certain new features bear close stylistic affinities with the illustrations of the Naya Mandir *Mahāpurāṇa*. In the treatment of human figures the angularity is considerably toned down; the further eye is completely eliminated, though the remaining eye is as elongated as in the Naya Mandir illustrated manuscript; the chest is exaggerated; the hand gestures are better drawn. As regards the grouping of figures and general composition, both follow the same convention. The treatment of trees, hills and water is almost the same in both manuscripts. The costumes in the Ms. dated 1540 show new departures, such as latticed turban and sewn garments. From the stylistic comparison of the illustrated Mss. described above it is clear that by the beginning of the 16th century in Northern India there were two styles at work—one more conservative which continued to follow old conventions, though alive to the new possibilities within its own conservative framework; and the other which though aware of new tendencies in art and its social background could not wholly throw away the burden of tradition but was amenable to compromise palpable in draughtsmanship, figure composition and costume drawings. The importance of the Naya Mandir *Mahāpurāṇa* lies in the fact that by enlarging the space for composition a larger number of figures could be introduced, resulting in convincing grouping and introduction of movement which could not be expected within the restricted area of Western Indian illustrations. In the treatment of landscape as well, a freshness of outlook, quite different to the conservative Western Indian school, may be observed. As a matter of fact, the artist seems to have been stirred by new emotions and was



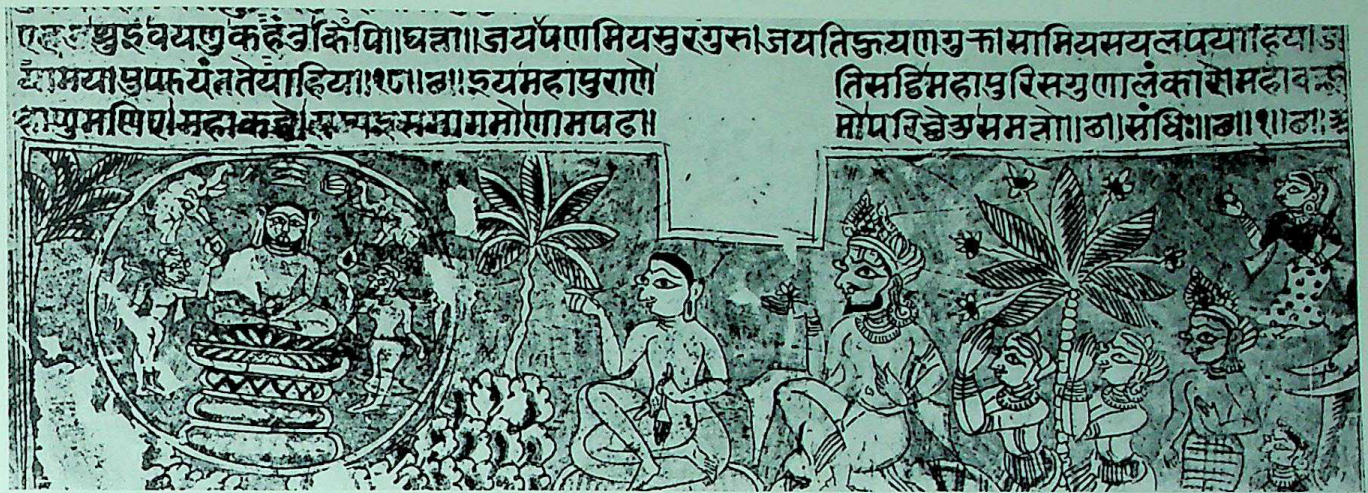


Fig. 1. King Śreṇika paying homage to Mahāvira and Goyama. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.

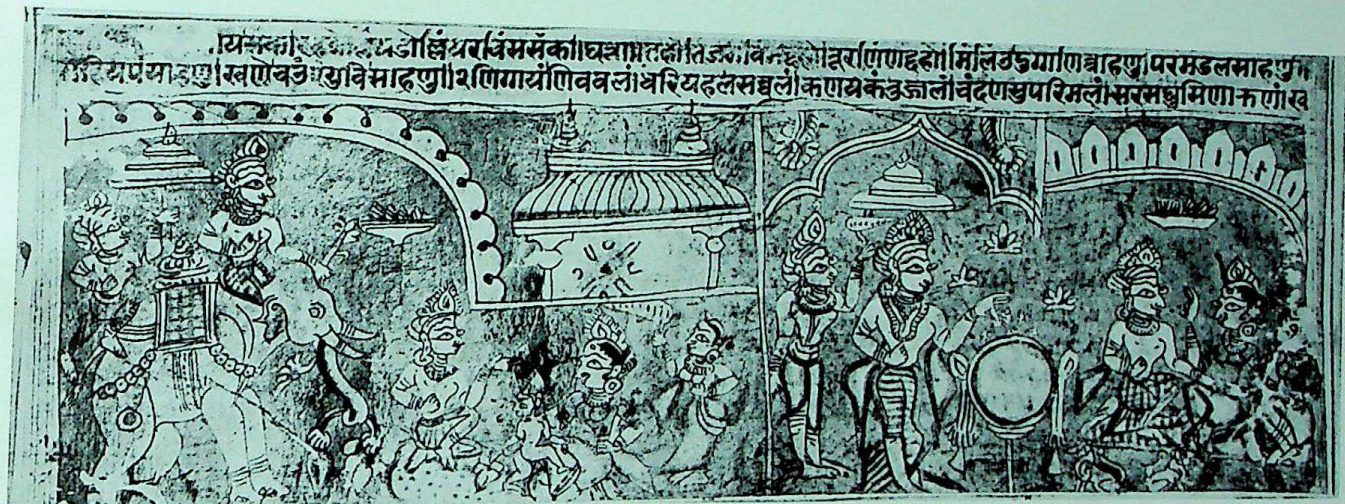


Fig. 2. Some of the *ratnas* of Bharata. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.

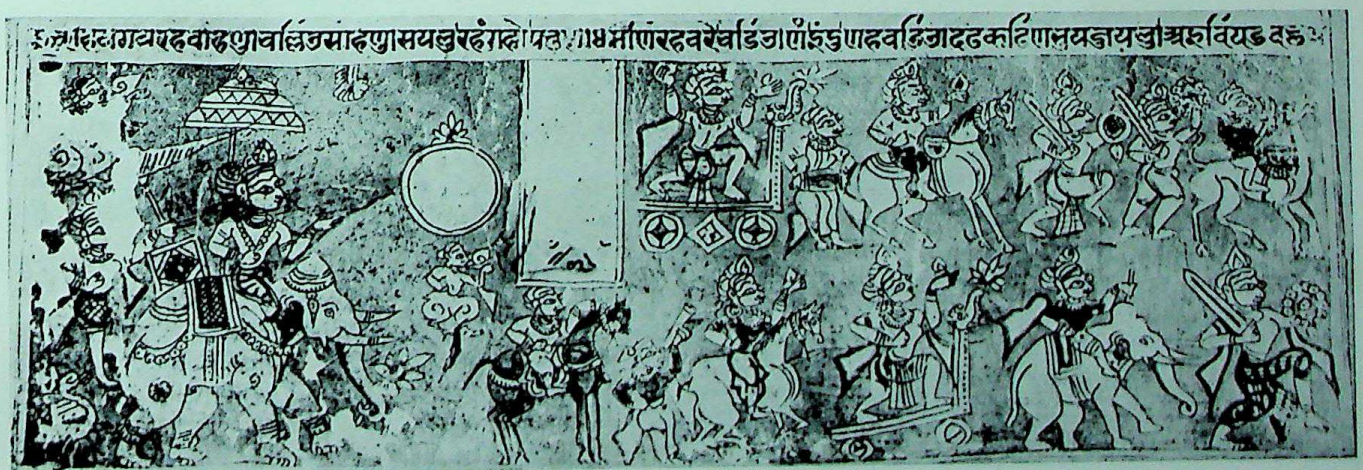


Fig. 3. Bharata's army on the march. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.



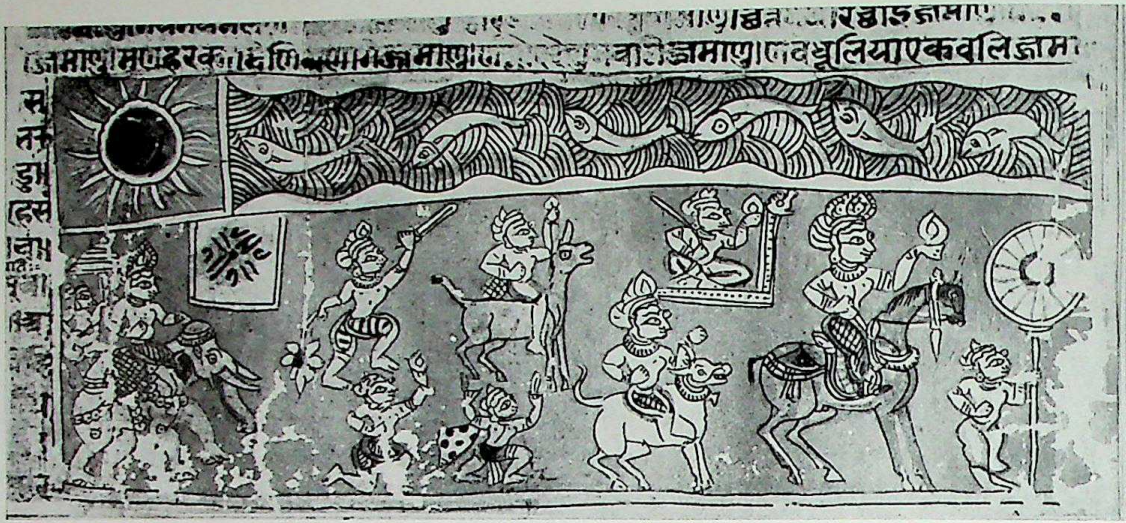


Fig. 4. Bharata reaching the Gaṅgā. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.

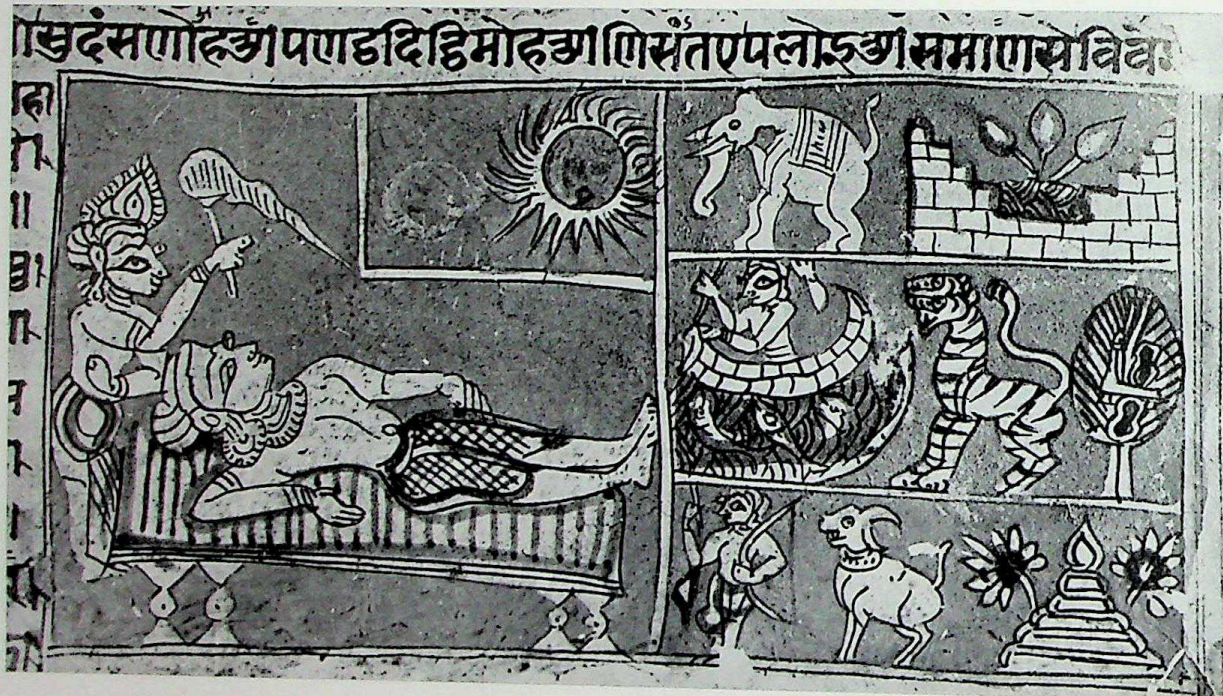


Fig. 5. Bharata reaching the Eastern Ocean. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.

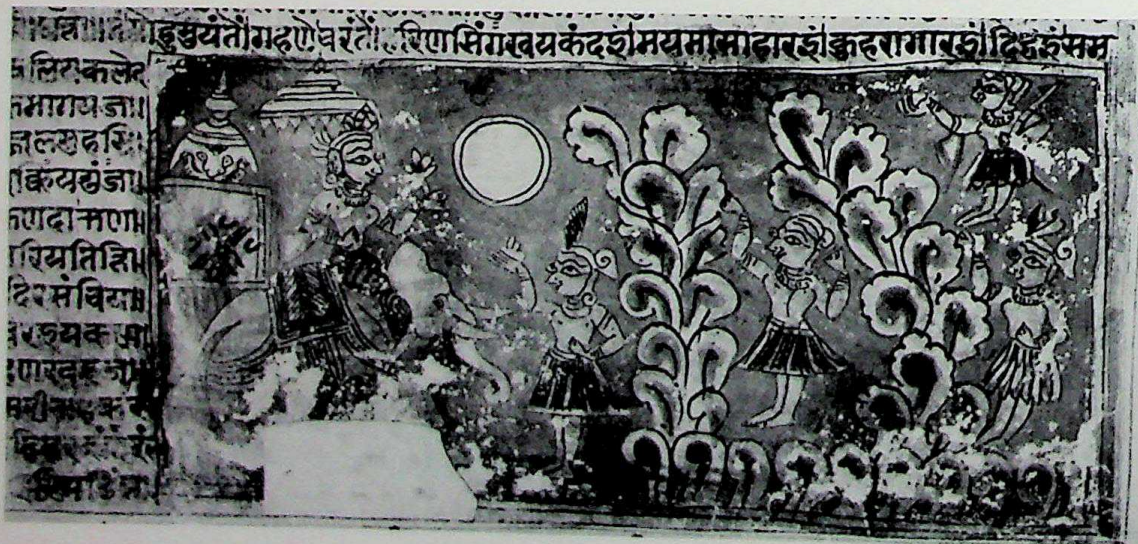


Fig. 6. Bharata and the Bhilla chiefs. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.





Fig. 7. The River Gaṅgā receiving Bharata. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.

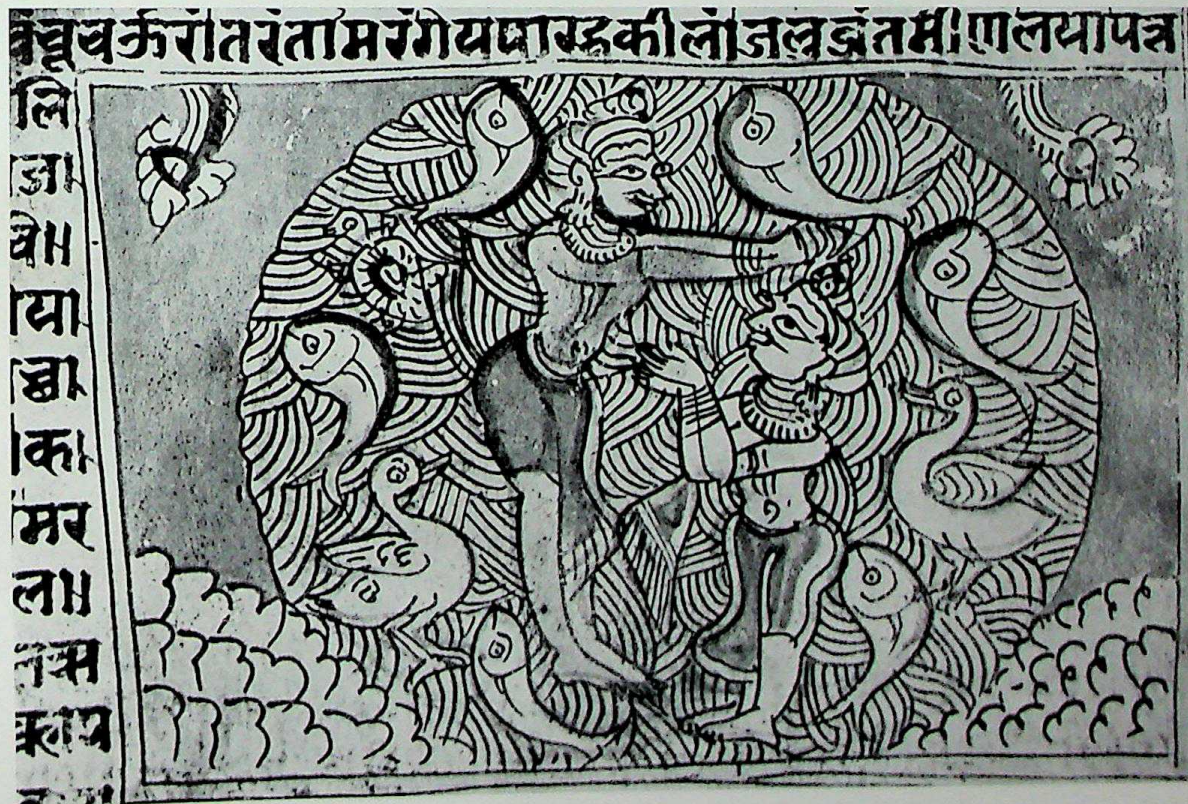


Fig. 8. Bharata and Bāhubali fighting in a lake. Illustration from a *Mahāpurāṇa* Ms. Late 15th century. Western Indian School (U.P.). Collection of Sri Digambar Naya Mandir, Delhi.



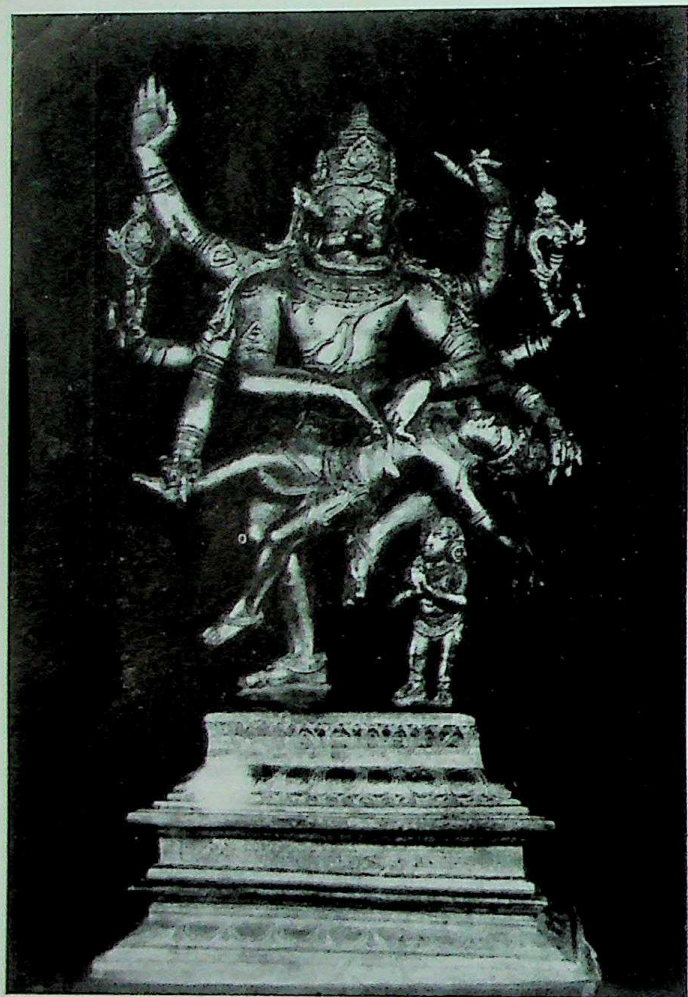


Fig. 1. Narasimha. Probably late Chola. *Circa* 13th century.  
Ht. 8½". Copper. Government Museum, Pudukkottai.



Fig. 2. Rear view, Narasimha.  
Government Museum, Pudukkottai.



groping for new forms of expression. If artistically they could not rise very high, they at least showed a new way to coming generations which was for them to improve.

#### DESCRIPTION OF PLATES

Plate D. Bharata holding court. Bharata is seated on a throne attended by a *chauri*-bearer and an umbrella bearer. Four courtiers are seated in front of him. A female dancer holding a flower in each hand is dancing. Behind her a female juggler is throwing up balls. Wavy cloud in the right corner.

Fol. 5, Rev. (Pl. XXIX, Fig. 1). King Śreṇika paying homage to Mahāvīra and Goyama. On the left, Mahāvīra on throne with an attendant on either side; outside a tree growing from a craggy rock facing which is seated Goyama. On the right, Śreṇika with a number of attendants.

Fol. 34 (Pl. XXIX, Fig. 2). Some of the *ratnas* of Bharata. On the extreme left Bharata on a massive elephant with an attendant holding an umbrella over him; a little further a queen fondling a child with a *chauri*-bearer behind her and Bharata seated before her. In the compartment on the right, Bharata attended by an umbrella bearer standing before the *chakra*. A little further on, he is conversing with his queen and an attendant. The monotonous monochrome background is relieved by simple arches, a pavilion and a few flowers.

Fol. 35, Rev. (Pl. XXIX, Fig. 3). Bharata's army on the march. It is a spirited scene. Bharata is on his white elephant shaded with an umbrella with a *kinnari* blowing conchshells at the back and a *kinnara* preceding him. His *chakra* is also seen. The army is divided into two rows made up of charioteers, horsemen, an elephant and foot soldiers, accompanied by a drummer and a trumpeter. In the upper row a camel rider is vigorously playing on the kettledrums.

Fol. 36 (Pl. XXX, Fig. 4). Bharata reaching the Gaṅgā. Bharata on the left on his elephant with an attendant holding an umbrella over him. The army consists of footsoldiers, a soldier riding an ass, a second a bull, a third a chariot. The group is led by a horseman and soldiers upholding the *chakra*. Curiously the river is represented at the top.

Fol. 37, Obv. (Pl. XXX, Fig. 5). Bharata reaching the Eastern Ocean. The scene is divided into two panels. In the panel on the left Bharata is seen reposing on a bed attended by a *chauri*-bearer; the blazing sun in the sky. The panel on the right is divided into three compartments; the upper one has an elephant and a lotus lake; the middle a boatman, a tiger and a tree; and the bottom one an archer, a bull and a mountain.

Fol. 37, Rev. (Pl. XXX, Fig. 6). Bharata and the Bhilla chiefs. Bharata on an elephant on the left, preceded by the *chakra*. A Bhilla chief wearing a feathered headdress and a kilt is offering him gifts. Three other Bhilla chiefs in a mountain on the right. Mark the curious treatment of the rocks.

Fol. 50, Obv. (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 7). River Gaṅgā receiving Bharata. On the left Bharata on his elephant followed by an attendant holding an umbrella and a *chauri*. Gaṅgā facing Bharata is lavishing his hand with the water from a pitcher. She is followed by an attendant carrying a pitcher on her head. At the top a mountain with a goddess.


Fol. 54, Obv. (Pl. XXXI, Fig. 8). Bharata and Bāhubalī fighting in a lake. The round lake has fish, a couple of swans and a tortoise; outside are shown hills. The towering personality of Bāhubalī has subdued Bharata.

Photographs : Courtesy of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



## A RARE ICON OF UGRA NARASIMHA

T. S. Sundaram

MONG the many bronzes of unique beauty and exquisite workmanship adorning the galleries of the Government Museum, Pudukkottai, the copper idol of Narasimha easily distinguishes itself (Pl. XXXII). It is an image of very fine workmanship, exhibiting a wealth of intricate details. Narasimha is standing on his right leg and the left is flexed at the knee and held up. Sprawling on the lap of the bent left leg is Hiranya. Standing below the god's left knee is the boy devotee Prahlāda, the son of Hiranyakaśipu, to save whom the god appeared in this form. The god has eight arms; the upper two hands are in the *abhaya* and *sūchī* poses, the next two are holding the *chakra* (discus) and *śaṅkha* (conch), the symbol of Viṣṇu, the third pair is holding the leg and crown of the victim, and the fourth pair, having long and sharp claws, is tearing open his bowels. Hiranya is holding a sword and a shield in his two outstretched hands. This form of Narasimha with eight arms is a rare specimen not described by T. A. G. Gopinatha Rao in *The Elements of Hindu Iconography*. The presence of Prahlāda in the group is an unusual feature. The idol measures 8½" in height including the pedestal.



## REVIEWS

*MEWAR PAINTING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:* Moti Chandra.

Lalit Kalā Series of Indian Art, 1957. Ten colour plates.

The past decade has seen a revolution in the study and appreciation of the painting of Rajasthan. The enthusiasm aroused by the finer series of pictures has led to a search for surviving examples and this together with the social changes of the times has brought to light much material for the art historian as well as the connoisseur. The development of the schools begins to be charted by dated colophons especially from the 17th century : but many difficulties and problems remain to be resolved.

Colour is so rich and significant a feature of the work of this period that every reproduction in colour is doubly welcome especially if so faithful as those now being made available to the world by Lalit Kalā.

Since it seems likely that Mewar was the principal founder of the Rajasthan School of painting in the 16th century it is a pity, perhaps, that this volume was not preceded by one devoted to that century. It is understandable, however, that the author and editor may have preferred to start from a point where there is more solid ground on which to build. But in that case one would have expected and welcomed reproductions of one or two of the 'Chavand' *Rāgamālā* series of 1605, referred to in the introduction, and recently introduced to the western public by four of its pages in the Kanoria collection. Since, however, these pictures are only about six inches square, too small for the ample pages of this series, we start off with another Kanoria page from a *Nāyikā* series, most of which we are told is in the National Museum of India, New Delhi. This is dated about 1640 ; and the historian immediately asks why. We are referred to Jahangiri features of architecture and costume, especially the four-pointed *jāmah*, which is rightly said to have disappeared from Mughal fashion in that reign. But as the author adds, this style lingered on elsewhere in northern India, and such external features alone do not suffice for dating. That there is admittedly a gap in the hitherto published dated material is frankly recognised in the introduction. Both the 'Chavand' set and the Jodhpur *Bhāgavata* pages are very different stylistically.

Let us for a moment then glance on at the example here reproduced for the first time from the Prince of Wales Museum *Rāmāyaṇa* of 1649 and at the pages from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* at Poona dated 1648 reproduced by Khandalavala in *Marg*, Vol. IV, both of which are securely assigned to Udaipur. It must be admitted that the former is something of a disappointment. It seems a lifeless reuse of a Mughal provincial composition, retaining from the earlier school of Udaipur only the rich colouring.



The Poona *Bhāgavata* is not drawn upon, but instead we are given a fine page from another series in the Kanoria collection, which is clearly in the same tradition (see *Marg*, Vol. IV, No. 3, fig. 1). It is here tentatively dated six years later. William Archer in the Arts Council exhibition catalogue had suggested 1680, which is perhaps nearer the mark. This is a rich tapestry-like style of which one would gladly see more. I see a fairly close continuation of this style in a well-known *Rāgamālā* series mostly now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (30-641 etc). One page, however, is in the British Museum collection and was reproduced in my *Rajput Painting* (Faber Gallery, 1943, Pl. 4) as early 18th century. I could now assign them to the closing years of the 17th century. Mughal influence is much reduced and there is a fine luxuriance.

But two reproductions are included in the Lalit Kalā volume from another *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* divided among several collections and here assigned to 1680-1700. In this the Mughal influence is said to be greater; and indeed the male figures do wear a kind of Mughal dress. But what is most striking about these pages is the rigid organisation of the picture very different from the rich freedom of Pl. 4. I would not have assigned this to the same school; or, if so, not to so early a date.

Another example from the Kanoria collection is reproduced on Pl. 3. This is from the Vaishnavite poet Sūrdās whose Braj Bhāshā verses appear above the Krishna Līlā picture reproduced. A date of 1650-51 is suggested for this brightly coloured series which was also introduced to the western world by the Arts Council in 1957. The male figures wear costumes of Shāh Jahān period, but this is not a reliable evidence for close dating. In style these do not seem far removed from the Boston *Rāgamālā* set referred to above; and it is perhaps permissible to refer also to a Jain Vijnaptipatra painted at Sirohi, immediately to the west of Mewar, and dated Samvat 1782 (1725 A.D.), to show the continuation of this kind of figure drawing and female dress style and pattern into the 18th century. I would like to date the Kanoria Sūr Sāgar 1680-1700.

An additional indication of late 17th century Mewar painting may surely be found among the portraits so strangely ignored by Moti Chandra. Among the series lent from the Udaipur State collection to the 1947 London Exhibition was one of Amar Singh II (1690-1710) inscribed as heir apparent. It is hard to reject the claim of such an inscription to be contemporary and the drawing in question (*Art of India and Pakistan*, Pl. 90, No. 417) to be of about 1690. How clearly this group resembles in feeling, stance, features the Kanoria *Nāyikā* which forms Pl. 1 of this volume, where it is attributed to 1640! It should not be a surprise to find Jahāngir costume surviving as late as this in Udaipur any more than in Basohli.

Moti Chandra's introduction sketches the political fortunes of Mewar, showing the independence fiercely vindicated from the Mughals during the 16th century but the forced submission of Amar Singh I (1597-1620). Thereafter it is natural to find an influx of Mughal artistic influence. The local tradition was probably strong enough to resist and transform it for some time. But what is the evidence for placing the high point of the school in the period of Jagat Singh I



## REVIEWS

(1628-52) and immediately afterwards? On the contrary in real sensibility and draughtsmanship, I can only see a decline during the 17th century from the high quality of the early Mewar School.

B. G.

*ARTS ASIATIQUES*, Vol. IV, (Four Fascicules), Paris 1957. 3000 frs.

In Fascicule 1, Govind Chandra attempts to identify various scenes at Sanchi as being based on literary descriptions by Āśvaghoṣa. His thesis is interesting though not convincing, because the incidents depicted at Sanchi need not have been taken by the sculptors from the works of Āśvaghoṣa. For instance, just as the Mathura pillar panels depict incidents from the story of Sundara and Nanda, so also such incidents could be depicted anywhere quite independently of Āśvaghoṣa's *Saundarānanda*. After all, the material in Āśvaghoṣa was well-known. He did not create it. The sculptors had no necessity to go to Āśvaghoṣa's writings to depict the various scenes at Sanchi. This criticism is apart from the fact that Sri Chandra's thesis will raise all sorts of difficulties regarding the dating of the gateways of Sanchi. Dr. Goetz in the same fascicule has an article on "The 'Scorretti Marble' and Cognate Sculptures." Dr. Goetz is wrong in thinking that the popularity of the Mahishamardini cult does not go back beyond Gupta times. That is certainly not true of the Rajasthan area in any event. What Dr. Goetz means by the Kanauj school of Gupta sculpture is difficult to understand. The author does not seem to have a clear focal point nor is there any adequate foundation laid for stating it would be natural to expect buildings and sculptures of Lalitāditya in the heart of Afghanistan. Thus Dr. Goetz' conclusions about the 'Scorretti' Mahishamardini are not very clear nor illuminating. C. Sivaramamurti's article "Iconographic Gleanings from Epigraphy" is a continuation of the type of work in which this scholar has been specializing. He relates inscriptional material to various sculptural themes such as *yakshas*, *nagas*, *lokapālas*, Lakshmi, Trivikrama, Harihara, Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti, Revanta, Viṣṇu as consort of Śrī, Gaṇeśa, Nāṭeśa, Hara-Gaurī, Varāha, Narasimha and many other deities. Critics are too often apt to view Indian art in a vacuum. While its purely aesthetic qualities can undoubtedly be enjoyed divorced from all other considerations, that is not enough. The art of a country must also be related to its cultural and historical background for its fullest appreciation as a part of the life of its people. The inscriptions referred to in Sivaramamurti's article make us aware of the fact that the gods and goddesses lived not only in sculptural form but also in the minds of the people, as can be seen from the constant reference to such forms by those who composed the inscriptions or other forms of writing. The article is profusely illustrated. Fascicule I includes a beautiful colour plate of the famous mother and child bust of the Kushana period from Mathura in the well-known mottled stone of that district. Several photos are also reproduced of a fine Mathura head in the National Museum of India, New Delhi. It is attributed to the Gupta period, but it is in fact an example of the Kushana-Gupta transition style.



Fascicule 2 contains an article on the results of the work at Khorezm in Central Asia during 1951-1955 by S. P. Tolstoi. Some of the fragmentary sculptures reproduced are of decided interest to students of Indian art, as also a mural of a lady's face. All these are ascribed to the 3rd century A.D. Fascicule 2 also has a series of fine photos of the Pallava rock sculptures at Trichinopoly (Tiruchirupalli) which are at the base of the rock and not so well-known as the reliefs half-way up. These early Pallava sculptures of the 7th century are truly magnificent and it is gratifying to see such good reproductions of them. Other articles in the fascicule, though not of immediate interest to students of Indian art, maintain the high standards of this journal.

Fascicule 3 contains an article on "Fragments of a Stupa in the Valley of the Kunar in Afghanistan" and "Notes on Khmer Iconography" by J. K. Bhattacharya. What, however, will interest students of Indian art most is Mme. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw's long review on Heinrich Zimmer's *The Art of Indian Asia* (completed and edited by J. Campbell). The review is fair and rightly emphasizes that Zimmer arrived at several erroneous conclusions because he did not acquaint himself sufficiently well with the chronological development of Indian art. For instance he states that Mahāyāna Buddhism came to Karle in the 2nd century A.D., basing this theory on reliefs that belong to the school of Deccan-Gupta sculpture of the 6th-7th century A.D. Mme. Lohuizen-de Leeuw rightly stresses the importance of correct factual data which some scholars treat much too perfunctorily. Facts, after all, are the hard core on which we can build theories and arrive at various conclusions. One cannot but deprecate the attitude which regards controversies as to dates etc., dry though they be, as academic and of no value. It is rightly pointed out that Zimmer relied for part of his factual data on Coomaraswamy, and it must be admitted that he had recourse to a great art historian. Nevertheless, what Zimmer overlooked was that Coomaraswamy's conclusions on many matters now require reconsideration. Even today one notices a deplorable tendency amongst critics of Indian art to follow blindly the statements made by early pioneers without so much as caring to glance at the very considerable body of writings since then which has corrected the many natural errors of these pioneer art historians. Not only Zimmer himself but the editor Mr. Joseph Campbell has also been guilty of such indifference on quite a number of occasions. But we are not able to agree with all of Mme. Lohuizen-de Leeuw's criticisms with regard to the dates given by Zimmer relying on Coomaraswamy. For instance, her theory that the Birmingham Buddha is not Gupta but much later is, according to us, quite untenable. But most of her criticisms are valid and her list far from exhausts the many errors that could so easily have been avoided. Though the editor, Mr. Campbell, has corrected some of them, he could have done a lot more in this direction. It is unfortunate that one can place no reliance on this book so far as chronology, classification or accurate dating is concerned. Those who are not careful on this score will find themselves involved into serious errors and absurdities such as, for instance, dating the comparatively cruder Dhumar Lena cave at Ellora as a century earlier than its prototype Elephanta; though the latter is mid-7th century at the latest and the former is probably late 8th century. So also there



## REVIEWS

are the most patent errors in dating metal images. But all said and done Zimmer's book is a very meritorious treatise and Mme. Lohuizen-de Leeuw handsomely recognizes this fact. Her constant reference to factual errors is not meant to detract from the value of the work and is not made with a view to run down the publication. It is meet that these errors be pointed out because so finely produced and important a book is bound to have a wide circulation and in consequence it is necessary that new comers to Indian art should not be misled, at least on topics beyond the pale of intelligent controversy. Mme. Lohuizen-de Leeuw has not referred to the paintings reproduced in Zimmer's book. Here again the factual errors are of a very serious character such as labelling late Mewar as Basohli, but it is outside the scope of this review to list them.

Fascicule 4 has a learned and comprehensive article on the *pūrṇa ghaṭa* by Sergiu Al-George and Arion Rosu. The authors have utilized various texts in dealing with its symbolism and treated the subject at considerable length with many illustrations. The theories of various critics are also considered. The truth seems to be that the symbolism of the *pūrṇa ghaṭa* cannot be limited to any one theory. The literary references involve differing ideas and even these were not necessarily the inspiration behind this motif as a sculptural concept. In fact its use as a motif in different periods of Indian sculpture has no common bond throughout nor can we point to a single source as being the inspiration of the varying ways in which the motif has been treated. A stage was reached when no particular symbolism inspired the craftsmen who merely used it as a decorative formula remembering faintly perhaps its connection with plant and water cosmology. Jean Boisselier deals with a superb bronze of Avalokiteśvara and its provenance and date. Dr. Krishna Parigrahi deals with Bhauma art and architecture of Orissa reproducing some interesting example of early medieval sculpture. This is an important article on Orissan art and architecture. K. Bhattacharya continues his notes on Khmer iconography. A relief from Nagarjunakonda acquired by the Musée Guimet is reproduced by Mireille Benisti. Though not to be reckoned amongst the finest work of this great site as far as excellence of craftsmanship is concerned it is nevertheless full of feeling and expression and is a notable acquisition for a European museum. Its interpretation as the grief at the departure of Siddhārtha and the return of Chhandaka is problematic in the absence of the horse, but the reasons given by reference to the *Lalitavistara* cannot be said to be unconvincing. We ourselves have no alternative suggestion to offer for the time being. Each fascicule has one colour plate and the get-up and production values are excellent throughout.

K. J. K.

*GRAPHIC ART OF JAPAN—THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL*: O. E. Holloway.

Alec Tiranti, London 1957. 101 plates, 5 colour plates. 30s.

A painstaking work devoted to the Classical School of Japan. This school which had as its centre the old capital of Kyoto, was responsible for the coloured print albums which are the subject of the book under review. Mr. Holloway explains in great detail the differences between the



Classical School and the later Plebeian Genre prints of Tokyo. Many books have been written on the subject of the Ukiyo artists, but it is patently obvious that the outpourings of the Classical School which flourished right at the beginning of the 19th century have been sadly neglected. To the scholastic and serious student of Japanese art, Mr. Holloway's footnotes — prolific in number, should prove of inestimable value. The references have been gleaned with great care. Although deriving from Chinese influence, it is at once apparent that the artists of the Classical School were by no means unoriginal in their approach to graphic art. Simplicity was the keynote and there is a sense of impressionism in many of the reproductions. The descriptions of the missing colours are not helpful in this respect, but presumably their presence would have made the book prohibitive in price. Mr. Holloway points out that the Westerner all too often misunderstands the tenets of Far Eastern painting because his mental approach is alien to a culture which 'was never so pre-occupied with the individual'. It would be superfluous to mention any artist's name in particular. Mr. Holloway lists a great many, giving in most cases the dates, numbers and editions of their albums. Some of the animal and bird prints are charming in their informal execution. Although perhaps belonging to a different 'genre' some of the figure studies are distinctly 'plebeian' in character; they are nevertheless imbued with a delightfully sensitive form of humour which places them apart from the more vulgar and commonly seen prints of the latter half of the last century.

P. H. H.







